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THE RED BOOK

Life of Frank Edwards

A Confederate Soldier in the
Army of Northern Virginia
From 1861 to 1865

EDITED BY EARLE E. GRIGGS

"He Went to the Last Ditch"



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FRANK EDWARDS

As he appears to-day, fifty years after the events herein narrated.

ARMY LIFE
OF
FRANK EDWARDS

CONFEDERATE VETERAN.



Army of Northern Virginia

1861-1865

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As the author appeared in the war on his way "to the last ditch."

PREFACE

My Comrades and Fellow Citizens:—

It is conceded by all nations that in the great struggle between the States from 1861 to 1865 the soldiers of the South won imperishable glory by their patriotism, faithfulness, bravery and self-sacrifice in defense of justice and honor.

I was mustered in the service of the Confederate Army in August, 1861, in Richmond, Virginia.

I am not boasting; I did everything in my power to discharge my duty as a Confederate soldier. I was never arrested during the four years, and hardly ever failed to stack arms with the company, even in forced marches of thirty-five miles, and even forty-five miles. I was in most all of the great battles that were fought, from Seven Pines to Manassas; from Sharpsburg to Maryland, to Fredericksburg, to Chancellorsville; from there to Gettysburg; from the Wilderness to Spottsylvania Court House, where General Gordon made that wonderful charge; and at the final battle and subsequent surrender at Appomattox Court House. I was in a great many battles, but fortunately was never wounded—except slightly at Chancellorsville and slightly at Fredericksburg.

I will not undertake to give you the history as I saw it, of all the battles. I have heard a great many say "the yankees never fought," but I tell you they never failed where I was. I was always ready to let go.

In the winter of '61 and '62, our command was on the Potomac, just below Washington City. In February, '62, I was sent to Richmond with the measles. I remained there one month. About the 15th of March, '62, Senator B. H. Hill was to speak at the capitol, Richmond. President Davis and his cabinet and a good many officers of the Confederate Army were present. I was convalescing at the time. I was

not an officer, but I put a little red strip on my collar and in the dark you would have to look the second time to see whether I was an officer. The meeting was at night. I was there, one for Hill from LaGrange, Georgia. Everybody wanted to hear the great orator from Georgia. The great hall was full and overflowing. I considered myself fortunate indeed. Senator Hill arose to make his address; he certainly had the attention of that magnificent body of men. Just at that moment Col. Gus Bull, of LaGrange, and General Pettigrew, of North Carolina, entered the hall. As they arose the officers arose to greet them. The Hon. Alex Stephens was near the speaker's stand. Senator Hill motioned to Mr. Stephens to come over, together with General Joe Johnston. They whispered together a few moments and then Senator Hill arose and said: "The program for the present will be changed. Colonel Bull from Georgia will address you. Colonel Bull is one of my best counsels, and besides is from LaGrange, Georgia, the dearest spot on earth, my home. You will certainly be entertained." Colonel Bull arose and said, "I am certainly unprepared for this occasion." About that time the whole house arose and cheered for Colonel Bull. Colonel Bull came around to the speaker's stand. It seemed that the building trembled, so great was the uproar in his honor. I desire to say this much for his home people and for the State of Georgia: The speech that he made that night has never been equaled but a very few times, if at all, in the great capitol building of Virginia, and you know some of the nation's greatest orators and statesmen have been reared in Virginia. I never heard such applause as was given Colonel Bull on that occasion. Do you have any conception as to how I felt? I was listening to the Colonel of the Twenty-fifth Georgia regiment, of which I was a member.

My comrades and friends, if for no other purpose have I lived for forty-six years than to write of that great occasion, I am glad. I feel proud that I am here to give honor to whom honor is due. It was

an accident that I heard that speech. I still thank God that I was there. There are but few left today that heard that great speech. It is the loss of Georgia and the Nation that we have no record of that speech.

The great battle of Seven Pines was fought May 31st, 1862. There Colonel Bull was killed, leading his regiment. A braver man never lived. One of the best drilled officers in the Army of Northern Virginia, it seemed his whole makeup was one of the greatest military talents. General Joe Johnston on general review at Fredericksburg, Va., in March, '62, offered a new dress uniform to the best drilled regiment. The Thirty-fifth Georgia, Colonel Bull's regiment (and mine), won that suit. Colonel Bull was a very strict disciplinarian. He loved his command and we loved Colonel Bull. Though very strict while on duty, you certainly loved the man when off duty. He always cared for his men, to see that they received justice, and you, my comrades, know that was lacking in a great many of our officers.

My friends, you may read casually, but I hope the people of his native town, LaGrange, will think in a patriotic way. I would place a monument to the memory of our great hero. He was killed on the battlefield for the great principle of justice, the greatest thing for which he could live and die.

Colonel Gus Bull, Lawyer, Statesman and General.

Colonel Bull was one of our best lawyers and one of the greatest military geniuses of the Civil War. I have never seen or heard his equal as an orator. He had a great knowledge of military affairs, and in the command of an army he had but few equals.

I must admit that I am not the man to do justice to his honor and integrity, as my command of language is not sufficient to express what I think is due him.

It seems that after forty-five years have passed, I would know his eloquent voice commanding his regiment. To know his ability as the leader of an army was to admire his military ability.

Though his rank was Colonel at the time he was killed in the early part of '62, had he lived he would

undoubtedly have been numbered among the great generals of the Confederacy.

During the war I was present several times in Richmond and heard his name mentioned in the most complimentary manner. His mind was quick and his conceptions broad. You may speak of Hill, Longstreet, Stewart, Gordon and other generals; if he had lived to show his ability his name would have been placed in the Hall of Fame. The State of Georgia would have been greatly honored as the home of one of the greatest men in the Confederate Army.

I felt proud of Colonel Bull. I claimed to be a proud soldier myself. You don't know how I felt when I heard Colonel Bull's name mentioned in a complimentary way; I felt honored myself, although I was a private soldier, because I was a member of his regiment.

My comrades, I have never felt embarrassed going to my rank, although I held my rank as a high private from '61 to '65; and I am proud of it. Today, when General Evans is honored, I feel honored, for my rank comes next always.

Colonel Bull was buried in the forest alone, without the military honors that were due him. He fell together with his comrades.

We were in a dangerous position and remained longer than we should. We were in a very thick forest. Finally overwhelming numbers compelled us to give way, just as Colonel Bull predicted before entering the battle. He said it was a bad move, and hesitated before advancing, but he advanced to his death. I knew a great many of our private soldiers could maneuver an army more successfully than some of the leaders. Lack of judgment by the men in power caused many of our poor boys to lose their lives.

I hope the good people of LaGrange will become so much interested in Colonel G. A. Bull, of the Thirty-fifth Georgia Regiment, who was killed and is buried with the unknown in the forests at Seven Pines, that they will erect a monument to his memory on the streets of LaGrange. Judge F. M. Longley, Mr. C. D. Hudson, Dr. T. S. Bradfield, Judge J. B. Strong and others say they indorse the movement.

BOOK ONE.

A Six Months' Siege—A Vidette Post and a Capture—
On Duty at a Farm House and a Strange and
Beautiful Love Which Grew From It—An Affect-
ing Farewell, and Back to Arms.

A Dramatic Moment Near the Close.

On July 15, 1864, our army crossed the James river parallel to the enemy. They were in sight of our great pontoon bridge. Both armies marched parallel to Petersburg. The great line of battle was formed by General Lee in front of Petersburg. General Grant's army was fronting General Lee's, being nearly twenty miles long. General Lee was compelled to lengthen out his lines on the right until it was merely a deploy skirmish line. After General Lee and General Grant maneuvered their lines to the best advantage, General Grant decided that he would move up just a short distance, in our front. General Lee moved up about the same distance, but General Grant saw there was a better position about one hundred yards further in front. General Lee was aware of the strategical value of that position. Both generals decided on the same night to move to the better position, neither knowing that the other was going to move. General Grant, about dark, moved up very quietly to the desired position. General Lee gave orders to move up about nine o'clock the same night. General Grant's army moved up about one hundred yards along the line before General Lee knew that General Grant was expecting to move. General Lee decided on a plan by which to move him back. He gave command for all the commands to move up their skirmishers ten paces in front of the line of battle. At eleven o'clock he gave orders to charge the enemy

out of that position with the skirmish line. We were ordered not to speak louder than a whisper. Grant's army was peacefully sleeping. The word was given. The distance was about three hundred yards. We crept up close by and sprang forward with a yell. You never saw blankets fly as they did there. We won the fight, the position was ours. They left over half of their arms. I don't think there were over half a dozen killed. We were ordered to entrench at once. By daybreak we had splendid works.

General Lee was expecting an assault, and about sunup the yankees charged. We were behind good works. They came within seventy-five yards before we fired; we fired, gave a yell at the same time, mounting the breastworks and drove them beyond the point from which they started. We returned to our position. They were mad through and through. The next night they began firing on our lines. Of course we returned the fire. Both sides kept up that regular firing for over six months. Both sides began to entrench, and the whole county was soon subsoiled. The rifle balls were piled up everywhere. We were underground.

My friends, just think for a minute! After marching for four long years, half fed, half clad, without money, over half of our brave boys killed or disabled, fighting, marching night and day, in the great valleys of Virginia, our homes in most all directions in possession of the enemy, our cities destroyed, our farms all gone to rack and ruin, fencing all down, and with the bridges, mills, factories and machinery all burned; our stock, hogs and sheep, and nearly everything else, destroyed; our ports closed and in many instances destroyed; it did seem to us that the nations of the world were turned against us; we had the worst to fight; we could rarely hear from our loved ones; it seemed there was nothing to do but fall in the charge.

My comrades, you know the dark days lasted long. It was beyond conception how we spent our young lives in the terrible trenches and forts at Petersburg,

as well as all during the war. We left our homes half educated. Our future was dark.

There was never an army that deserved more honor; greater patriotism was never shown; greater generalship was never recorded.

But what did we do? We stood there and held that position until we received orders from General Lee to evacuate. Therefore we were not driven away, but left the city of Petersburg quietly and in good order.

But before the city was evacuated the great blowup occurred. I was sitting down, after being relieved from guard duty, eating a morsel of bread and drinking a glass of water. Without any warning, the earth, rails and everything seemed to fly upwards, accompanied with a terrific roar or explosion. It missed our line about ten feet. The intention was to tunnel right under our lines, twelve hundred yards; they missed it about ten feet. As it was, they killed a good many of our boys. I saw our men give back; then the negroes charged. They took the lines for about five hundred yards, but did not hold it thirty minutes. We charged and killed every negro in the ditch. We certainly filled that crater with dead negroes. White soldiers charged the next time, and they were treated the same way.

Cold weather was now felt. We began to prepare a little for winter. A portion of us had moved back a short distance into winter quarters. Now, about January 1, 1865, we began to clear and brush up the broken places. Now and then the boys would dodge a shell. No one knew when we would break camp, though we thought we would remain there until the winter broke. About this time we had very pretty weather, and we began to look for some move on the part of the enemy. How we did dread the consequences. Our army was reduced considerably; many had been killed and wounded; a great many sick, due to long marches and great exposure.

A Close Call.

One day we were standing close by the Colonel's tent. I was very well acquainted with the Colonel.

A courier came up to the tent at full speed. He carried an order from Lt. Gen. A. T. Hill. We all expected to move at once. But he wanted just one man to go away out on the left to a vidette post, some three miles away.

"General Hill desires a man that knows all about the movements of an army, and one that will hold that post, if possible. One that will keep wide awake," said the Colonel.

He just turned to me and said: "Here is the boy, right here," with a smile. I said to myself, "Lord, help me!" and to the Colonel, "Where will I report?"

"Just follow this man." That was the courier that brought the order. General Hill's quarters were four miles away. To the courier I said, "Move your saddle up just a little, your honor; I will ride in the rear, if you will permit."

"Certainly."

I said to the Colonel, "Do not report where I go, only to the Captain." We were soon in General Hill's headquarters. I said to the courier, "Look here, where do I go? I would like to know."

"I can't tell you, no one knows but General Hill. He has one man beside you."

General Hill came out very soon. I gave him the military salute. He said, "Well, boys, I am going to send you on a very particular post, five miles away. I will give you your instructions. I have been looking for the enemy to move down on the Weldon railroad. I have been watching very closely. They expect to cut that road to stop our supplies. Now, gentlemen, look and listen for the enemy. You know what kind of noise an army makes preparing to move. Now, think what great responsibility is upon you. It may be that judgment and close observance on your part will save the army a great victory. Now, I will be expecting to hear something before day. If you think the enemy is moving, report to me at once. Pay no attention to any one. There will be no danger on your part, if you will keep your eyes open. Your post will be close to the enemy."

He ordered a courier to point out our post. General Hill took our names. We passed on.

Just before we arrived at our destination we struck a very wide, muddy swamp, one hundred and fifty yards wide, and very marshy. Sometimes in going over this we would miss a tuft of grass and down we would go, nearly knee-deep. We could hardly see our way. Neither of us said a word. After awhile we landed on the other side.

"Here is your post, Mr. Edwards, by this pine. I advise you to stand close by that post and listen and keep a lookout and do as you were ordered," said the courier.

I said I would be governed by circumstances. He said, "Good night, Mr. Edwards; I wish you success." The other fellow went a mile further on.

Do you have any idea of how I felt? That pine seemed to be the tallest tree I ever saw, about a hundred feet to the first limb. I did as I was ordered, and stood very, very close to that pine. I could see a flash of lightning occasionally, and it was misting rain a little, just enough to make it very lonely; my feelings were such that I can not describe them. No one near. The man with whom I came was a mile away, and the enemy within about one hundred and fifty yards of my post, but I can't say that the enemy was any consolation to me. I stood there listening, thinking. I could not tell you all I thought, only my thoughts were such that my hair seemed to stand straight up.

About nine o'clock I heard the artillery and wagon trains of the enemy moving and also heard the command, "Fall in," given by the officers of the opposing army.

About that time I heard a rustle in the leaves just in front of me, about ten steps away. I did not look. I simply stood and listened. The undergrowth was oak and hickory, very thick. I will say this much, I don't think my breathing was ever so short. It seemed that I could "swallow my throat." That something kept moving towards me. It moved something like

a hog in the leaves. It moved to my right and then to my left, just a little closer every time. I began to think. I decided to risk one eye anyway. My face was very close to the pine and my hat off. I looked very close to my right and saw a bulk of something about five paces from the pine. That was my pine yet. I was satisfied that that something was a yankee. But I could not tell what he wanted to do; but I had it fixed in my mind what I was to do. I heard him make about three steps towards my pine. He came to a standstill as though he thought, "Nobody here." I was very close to that pine, indeed. I thought, "Now was the time to act." A great deal depended on that first move. If I fired and killed him, the enemy would hear and come at once. I made ready. He was about two paces from the pine. I jumped right in his front; I had the drop. I said, "Surrender." He jumped and threw down his gun, and said, "Yes, yes, yes! I will! I will! Don't shoot!" I said, "Step here to me." He came right up. I said, "Throw down your other weapons—your knife and everything that will kill." He said, "My friend—" I said, "You are not my friend, and don't call me your friend."

"I did not slip up with the intention of killing you; I intended to capture you," he said. "We get a forty days' furlough when we capture a Johnnie. My brother captured a man from this post last night, and he went home today." "Yes, indeed, I will give you a greater furlough than that," I remarked.

We talked about ten minutes. I then asked him, "Is your command moving?" and he answered, "Yes, sir; about nine o'clock they began to move on the Weldon road. Grant will tear up that road tomorrow."

I said, "He will never get there; * * * Well, we will pass to the rear, Johnson, move up." (His name was Johnson.) I gave him my name and address.

I was then getting in a hurry to get to the camp of General Hill.

We plunged through that swamp in a hurry; and just as we struck the other side, we came up with

three of our men, and they halted us and requested the countersign. I stepped up, and with a bayonet pointing to my breast, whispered, "Richmond." That was the countersign that night. He said, "Who is that you have there?" I said, "I can't tell you," and told Johnson to go ahead. The man called, "Hold on there." I said I hadn't the time; that I was on special business. He said, "You have a prisoner. Just turn him over to me." I said, "I captured this man, and I am going to carry him to General Hill, at the risk of my life." He said, "I am a commissioned officer. If you don't surrender that man you will be punished." "I am not particularly interested in your stripes, but about your command—this prisoner is mine."

He said, "I will shoot you on the spot."

I said, "Go ahead, Johnson." He said, "I will report you before day." I said, "All right, I will see you later. Go on, Johnson."

He went on, and we passed and left them.

I struck up with a cavalry camp, two miles from there. We were met with the command, "Halt! Who comes there?"

"Friend," I answered; "is this the direction to General Hill's headquarters, if you please?"

"Just go around out there and you will strike the road that leads to his quarters."

After we struck the road we halted a few minutes; my prisoner seemed to be much relieved. He was apparently about twenty years of age, handsome and very intelligent. He said, "I like your style as a soldier very much." He seemed very much attached to me. "I like the way you disposed of that officer; you did right. You have been in the service some time?" "Yes, ever since the war began."

"I see you are not very easily bluffed." I said, "He had no right to you. General Hill said pay no attention to any one; I went to that pine with the intention of holding that pine, at any cost."

I know I was in a close place and I thought he was making his way up to get an opportunity to shoot

me on the post; I knew they were close by and might have heard me when I took my stand. But, I did right all the way through.

That officer and those two men were just traveling around to see what they could find. I was always ready to obey my officers; I knew he was not on duty of any kind. He just thought if he could get possession of that prisoner, he would get all the information and carry it up and get the name of a hero; if there was any honor he would be the man. I had authority, and I made use of all I had. I had General Hill behind me, and that was sufficient.

We passed on, and found General Hill's quarters about two and a half miles away. Just before we arrived at his quarters some one said, "Halt! Who comes there?" "Friends. I desire to see General Hill on particular matters." "You can't see him now; he is asleep." "I have a prisoner here, captured on post in front." "Well, just turn him over to me. I will take charge of him."

"No one can get this prisoner. I am going to General Hill's tent. Go on, Johnson." "Hold on there."

I made no reply; I had no time to lose with that fellow.

"We will have you arrested."

I made no reply, but went right to General Hill's tent. I met his aide at the door. "What is your business, sir? What is your name?" "My name is Edwards."

General Hill jumped to the door. "Yes, sir, this is my man," he exclaimed. "Edwards, tell me what you know. Who is this you have here?" "I captured this man on post."

"I tell you, your act is worth something; tell me; come right in, you and your prisoner; take that seat, Edwards." Then he handed my prisoner over.

I said, "General Hill, I think I have the desired information, all right. The enemy is moving; took up the line of march about 11:30 o'clock. This man will give you all the information you desire."

"All right, tell me the movements of your army. No one will know what you say to me."

The prisoner said: "General Hancock's corps began to break camp about eight o'clock tonight. He will move down on the Weldon road. He intends to tear up that, and thus stop your supplies." General Hill said, "Yes, yes. I will meet him just before he gets there. Captain, get in motion just as quick as possible. Get around to all the commands at once; it's one o'clock now; I want my corps to meet the enemy before day."

After he gave orders to his staff he turned to me and said:

"Edwards, this information is very important indeed. Mr. Edwards, tell me of your encounter with the prisoner." I said, "General, I did all I could to carry out your instructions. I took possession of that pine, and I held it." He smiled. "I was standing very close to the pine; I was listening and looking. I heard this man rustling the leaves; he went to the right and to the left, a little nearer each time; I looked and saw the bulk. I was thinking what course to pursue. He came very close and stopped, as though there was nobody near. I jumped in front of him, got the drop on him and said, surrender. He jumped very high and gave up."

General Hill and the prisoner both laughed.

Then I told him about the close calls I had on my way to his tent.

He said, "I must commend you for your good judgment in the course you pursued. Many another would have left his post or suffered capture. Your course with that officer should be published for the good of the others. Most of them would have obeyed the officer and given up the prisoner. Now, I will tell you something else. I have placed four men on that post. I feel proud to say that you have been the successful man. All four of the others were either captured or killed. Now, I am going to do something for you. If I could, I would give you a furlough; but you know that can't be done at this time. If you will

hold up a while I will get for you a furlough home. I think you have earned it.

"There was an old citizen here this morning that desired a quiet, sober young soldier to come and look after his home. He said the soldiers were bothering him very much. He wanted some one to come there and board with him. It's a good place, about eight miles from here. I will give you a permit until General Lee moves his entire army from Petersburg. I pass that way some time, and I will pay my compliments to you there and thank you for the information you have given us."

I said I would gladly go, and thanked him.

General Hill moved his corps to the Weldon road. Just as he formed his line, the yankees charged on the road, and were badly defeated. General Hill's corps was the only one in the battle.

Well, it seemed that I had had a bad time. Fortunately I drew a new uniform the next day after I left General Hill's quarters. I hardly knew what to do, my clothing was very much soiled, and I hesitated at going anywhere but to the front. I went out to Petersburg, got a hair cut, came back and then started to my new home.

I did not know any one there, never heard anything about the people, except what General Hill told me, that they were fine people. I am afraid that I was somewhat bashful. About four o'clock in the afternoon I was close by my new home. I had been in the army four years and knew very little about the ways of society, and was more or less nervous around young ladies. I only hoped the people where I was going had a small family. I took my time as I neared the house. I heard somebody coming down the road, and I jumped to one side; they never turned their heads, and I was still giving back when I discovered that I was out in the woods and they were gone.

No one can tell how I felt going up to that old gentleman's home. I was young, and in a strange country. I confess to some trembling and quaking of my limbs. My breath came shorter the nearer I came

to that place, and I felt a weakening that I could not account for. I thought, "I wish I knew whether he has a daughter or not. I wonder how many. I don't know what time they have supper. Maybe I had better move up." I walked up to the gate and said, "Hello!"

A young lady came to the door. I raised my hat politely, and asked if the gentleman of the house was present. "Yes, sir; come right in."

She turned and walked right back through the great hall. The house was a very fine two-story brick building, a typical old Southern mansion.

Presently the old gentleman came out, and I introduced myself. He asked me to come in. I told him that I wished to get a little information from him, and asked him to come down to the gate. We sat down on a small seat just outside the gate. I asked him if he was the gentleman that called to see General Hill and asked for protection for his home; that wanted some young soldier to come here and stay and look after his interests. I suggested that I might not please him. He said, "Well, I like your appearance. You are the man I want." I thanked him and asked him what it was he desired me to look after.

He said, "Mr. Edwards, you know that a great many soldiers will take chickens, hogs, sheep and such as that, which is very provoking. I learned that if I could get one soldier to stay nearby and let them know that I had protection that they would not come around and bother me." I said, "I will protect you and your family the very best I can; and if I fail to please you, don't hesitate to dismiss me at once."

"I don't think I will do that, as I think you are the one I want. I will board you, furnish you a bed-room."

I told him that I preferred to stay outside; I had a nice little fly tent that I always used, if he would furnish me a little straw.

"No, I don't want you to do that; I much rather you would occupy a good room, but I have a very good and comfortable little house out here, a room about fifteen feet square."

I told him that I appreciated his kindness in offering me a room, but I was just from the front, and my clothing was soiled. He had the little room arranged and I moved in.

He said that he would have one of the servants to bring my meals. I thanked him, and remarked, "I will kill anything that interrupts your holdings here."

He replied, "No, I don't want you to kill."

"Well, I will make them think so." He then said that he would have wood carried to the room for me as I needed it.

All that I have said above actually occurred. I remember just as well as if it were yesterday.

Let me tell you about those girls, as they come into my mind. I had never felt like I felt then. The old gentleman said there was in the family his wife, and two daughters about my age. We had very fine weather from the time I captured that "yank" up to that time. I don't think you can hardly realize how I felt when I went in that house, so nicely furnished, and the old gentleman was so kind. It was something I hadn't been accustomed to in a long time. It seems to me—and I have thought over this a great many times—that it surely must have been providential; from the time I left camp to go to the vidette post and went all the rounds that I did, and to wind up at this old gentleman's home—a perfect paradise to me, it was wonderful. I felt greatly relieved. I tell you politeness and appreciation controls the world. I never thought General Hill would have treated me with as much politeness as he did. I have always thought since, if he hadn't been killed shortly after the above occurrence he had something else for me, because he indicated that he did; though I felt very thankful indeed that he sent me to this old gentleman's home, where I was treated so nicely. During the two months' stay or over, I was not on duty, out from the front, away from all exposure and danger.

While I write it brings most everything fresh to my mind. Sometimes I find it hard to control my emotions when I think of so many of our best boys

lying in the dust around Petersburg and the heights of Virginia. A few of us are left; for some good motive, I hope.

"Well," the old gentleman a little later said, "just make yourself at home; supper is now ready." I stepped in my cabin, and saw that Aunt Sallie, the cook, had supper on the table, and that it was very nicely arranged. I ate very heartily, indeed.

After supper, the old gentleman came out, and asked if I was all right. I told him I was, and had enjoyed my supper very much. We sat and talked about the war a long while. I saw he liked the Georgia soldiers very much.

He remarked, "I don't think the war will last very long; our army seems to be decreasing and the other increasing. General Lee can't stand very long. Well, as you seem tired and worried, I will be going. I want you to come up and meet all my family; they would be very glad to have you come up and tell them something of your war experience." "All right," I said; but I had not the least idea of going, my intention being to stay right around close to my quarters.

I slept fine that night. Early the next morning the cook came down. She said she didn't know what time I ate breakfast, and I told her just whenever she got ready. I made arrangements with the old negro to take my clothes and blanket out and launder them, and told her I would pay her for all she did for me. She said she would come for them the next morning.

"Mr. Edwards, we have a good old 'Marster' and 'Mistress.' He is a good old man, and I tell you he has two good 'gals,' sho' as you're born. You go up and see 'em."

"I will see about that later," I said. The old negro pointed out the pump, right at the dining room. I took my gun and walked around. I came back and Aunt Sallie arranged the breakfast on the table. I tell you that breakfast was fine, and that coffee—it tasted better and better. She gave me a bucket and towels and soap. You don't know how glad I was to get that soap. I took the bucket after breakfast and

went down to the pump. I thought I heard some one moving around in the dining room, and caught a glimpse of some one at the window. I picked up my bucket and made my way back to my quarters. Aunt Sallie came out to get the dishes.

"Mr. Edwards, what you come 'way so quick for? I told them 'gals' all 'bout you; what a fine looking fellow you was."

I replied, "I thought I heard some one in the dining room."

"Yes, yes, they was right in the dining room to get a peep at you while at the pump; they wanted to see you."

The old gentleman came out and inquired after my welfare. I told him I was perfectly delighted with my new home and surroundings. He insisted that I should go to the house and meet his family, but I excused myself that time. He then asked me to walk around with him. I reached back to get my gun. "Oh, you don't need that."

I said, "I just want to advertise that you have protection here."

We then walked down to the barn, and I saw his stock. He had fine horses and fine cattle. We went around to his sheep lot, where he had a fine lot of sheep and goats. He said the army had forced him to give up a great many sheep, goats and some horses and beef cattle.

"That is why I wanted you for protection; just let them know you are here."

He had a fine plantation and, besides, had some good property in Richmond. He had three children, two daughters, and one son who was killed at Manassas.

"Mr. Edwards, I have good sport sometimes. There is a large lake about a mile from here, and I sometimes bait that place for ducks, and have killed as many as two hundred. We will go out tomorrow and bait."

I said all right, I would like that very much; much better than shooting at yankees.

I liked the old gentleman.

As we were looking around, I could see those two girls looking. I suppose just to see what kind of a tramp they had there. I apparently never noticed them at all. I passed on to my quarters, and he started towards the house. He did not go very far before he came back and said, "Well, Edwards, I never thought I would be as well pleased with any one as I am with you."

I thanked him and said, "So far as I am concerned, I can't tell you how I have felt since I have been here, and I don't think I could better myself—this side of Georgia."

Soon his wife came around, and I was introduced to her. "Well, Mr. Edwards, my husband speaks so well of you I thought I would come around and meet you. We want you to come up to the house; we have a good room there; nothing whatever will interrupt you there."

I thanked her, but would not accept at that time.

"The girls were opposed to having any one coming in the house," she said. "If you were an officer, they would have been perfectly willing for you to occupy that room, because they have a better opportunity to keep it nice. But I am going to tell them you are so nice and a real good looking fellow. I had rather you would occupy my room than any man I have seen yet."

I thanked her again for her expression of confidence. "Tell your daughters that I am not an officer, and that I am well pleased with this little house."

"Now, Mr. Edwards, maybe I should not have said anything about that; that all passed before you came."

"Well, some of our boys are very bad, indeed, and don't take any care of themselves, but they are excusable. I was thinking they were opposed to me because I was a private soldier. I have never been associated with girls a great deal, for I left home quite young." She left my little cabin still insisting on my coming up to the house.

Aunt Sallie came around with the dinner, and I went down to the pump to get water, and, while there,

Aunt Sallie ran around and said to the girls that I had gone to the pump. I went around to the stove room and pumped and pumped, but got no water. I decided I would not go to the other one. About that time here came Aunt Sallie.

"Can't get no water? I expect those girls have been here and stopped the pump. Hush, they are in the dining room right now."

"All right, let them look." She went back in the house.

Aunt Sallie came with the supper that night, and had much to tell me. "The girls were right at you; right at the window and saw you," says she.

I said, "Did they say anything good?"

"Well, I don't know whether to tell you or not; they told me not to tell anything. Well, if you won't tell nobody, I will keep you posted."

"All right, what did they say?"

"The oldest likes your looks splendid. They want you to come in; they are anxious for you to go in the house. I tell you, Mr. Edwards, they are both good girls, but I like the youngest best; you will, too. Now, let me tell you, I want you to see the youngest. When you go to the pump again let me know."

"All right."

I had never seen the youngest.

"I will tell her you are going to the pump," she said.

I rested well that night. Bright and early Aunt Sallie came in with the breakfast, and I said, "I am going to the pump, Aunt Sallie."

"Hold on, I want to see Miss Emma first." She met Miss Emma at the door. "He's at the pump."

She went to the dining room and looked through the window. As she looked I looked toward the window and our eyes met. Both turned away. Then, I loved her. I can't tell you how I felt toward her. I have never felt that way since toward any one. It seemed to me that I had met a good friend. I went back to my quarters. Aunt Sallie came out.

"Did you see Miss Emma?"

"No, I never looked."

"I bet she saw you." I drank a cup of coffee. The old gentleman came out in the yard and said he was ready to go out and bait the place on the lake for the ducks. We fixed everything so as to be ready for the next morning. Next morning we went out very early. His duck gun, as he called it, was about eight feet long. It looked very much like he expected to kill all he wanted at one shot. We got behind the blind and the old gentleman placed his gun on the rack. "Now, I will show you how to kill ducks," he said, as he adjusted his gun to the spot we had baited. "Now, when they begin to come down they will cover the baited spot just as thick as they possibly can get together." About day they began to come in all around. The air was almost dark with them. The old gentleman began to get ready to shoot. It seemed to me then that one hundred thousand would have been a small estimate of the ducks there. "Look out, I am going to shoot," he warned, and stepped up and snatched a small twine string. The gun sounded like the enemy was in our rear. A negro boy went out in a boat and brought in about eighty or ninety large ducks. Ducks kept on falling in every direction. I enjoyed that sport. He had them dressed and sent out to market.

I could not help thinking about myself—where I was; the life was so altogether different to what I had been accustomed to; I thought about the girls back at the house; I thought of the front. The old gentleman broke into my reverie by saying, "This is the way to get them."

"Yes, sir; great sport, indeed."

I will never forget the result of that shot.

After we returned to the house the old gentleman's wife came out to my quarters, just as I was finishing breakfast.

"Well, Mr. Edwards, what do you think of the way the old man kills ducks?"

"I began to think the yankees were in our rear. I never saw anything like it." She laughed.

"I would like to live in this sport."

"Well, the war will soon be over."

"I was told that four years ago, and the war is still raging."

"Well, I hope you will never be compelled to fire at the yankees again."

About that time the old gentleman came up. "I was very glad Mr. Edwards went out with me this morning; he seemed to enjoy the sport." I replied that I never saw anything to equal it.

"We will prepare one tomorrow for dinner, and we will expect you to come up and meet the girls and take dinner," was the invitation from the kind old lady.

"You don't know how I appreciate your kind hospitality, and I will come up and take dinner with you tomorrow. You expect no one else?"

"No one else, Mr. Edwards; no one but you and my family."

"I sometimes suffer from an embarrassment that is peculiar to myself. I have always been diffident in my nature, and I hope you all will take that into consideration, for, as you say, an officer has a better opportunity to dress himself."

"I regret very much making that statement to you about what the girls said. Please do not mention to the girls what I said in regard to the officers." I assured her I would not. Still I felt some embarrassment, for I had not used a knife and fork in about four years; used by fingers, and drank the hottest coffee out of a tin cup. It looked like to me it would stay hot some time from one meal to the next.

I began to think how I would get ready for tomorrow. Aunt Sallie brought in my supper. I said, "You all just cook and eat; it comes around a great deal more frequent than I am accustomed to." She offered to go down to the pump and get water.

"No, I will go; I want to learn how to use that pump."

I ate supper, got my gun and walked around about the barn. I looked around and saw Miss Emma sitting in the window upstairs. The moon was shining bright. I raised my hat. She waved both hands to

me, very friendly. I tell you, how I felt is surely beyond me to explain. She moved away and I passed on. I afterwards learned the family was at supper when I passed, and Aunt Sallie told Miss Emma that I was passing the gate and she ran upstairs.

While walking along I saw a sheep with its head fastened in the fence, and released it. I walked around a little ways and started back to my quarters, but came very near losing the way back, I was so elated. I had never met Miss Emma; had only seen her at the dining room window; had never said one word to her, nor she to me; but what a lasting impression she made on me. The passion of love had never been aroused in my breast before. Then and there I would have given my life for that girl, although I had never uttered one word to her. When I caught her eye at that window, I will never have command of language sufficient to tell what I felt, while standing at the pump, and she was standing at the window, about six or eight paces away; and the second time I saw her was upstairs in the window.

The day I must go up and meet all the family and partake of their hospitality perturbed me. I looked around and found a "fried" shirt, and next morning I fixed up the best I could. One little thing flustered me a little that morning. About three times before this I had seen an officer ride up, hitch his horse and go right in. Aunt Sallie laughed and said, "That's Miss Emma's best fellow. He has been coming here about three months." I saw the old gentleman coming down the walk.

"Now, Mr. Edwards, dinner is about ready." We went right in—that much dreaded place.

Somebody may want to know how I felt. If one had been outdoors they could have heard my heart beating; at least, that is the way I felt.

I met his oldest daughter. The host wanted to know, "Where is Emma?"

His wife replied, "She will be in after awhile."

"Well, Miss Lou, I am more than glad to meet you."

I have felt a little delicacy in coming to the house; the greatest reason, I must admit, being that it has been so long since I was in ladies' company, and I felt somewhat embarrassed. As soon as I came in, I was all right."

The old gentleman and his lady were very much elated over the result. I proved by the old people that Miss Lou was the most excited. I considered that I came out all right.

Miss Lou says, "Well, Mr. Edwards, let me tell you the truth of the matter: Papa and mamma both said you were so backward, I looked for you to almost give away when you came in, though I find that I am pleasantly disappointed." We all laughed.

I was a little worried that Miss Emma did not make her appearance, though I thought I understood that. We went in to dinner. I presume the old man thought he would give me a fair test, so he said, "Mr. Edwards, give thanks, will you?"

I was not expecting this. I will tell you what I said: "Lord, we thank Thee for this day and for this dinner, for Christ's sake."

I did not hesitate; I said what I had to say at once. I told them that my mother nearly always called on me to give thanks. It had been a number of years since I sat at such a well supplied table; there were so many different things. Still Miss Emma had not yet made her appearance. I remarked to them that if I should lay down my knife and fork and go on with my fingers, they need not be surprised. At this they laughed, very heartily. After the dinner was served, and especially those two big fat ducks, I felt considerably relieved.

Miss Lou invited me in the parlor, and I thought it was the finest furnished room that I had had the pleasure of seeing in many days. She asked me if I liked music, and when I told her I did, she took a seat at the piano and began to play and sing. It was certainly fine music, as fine as I ever heard, and she had a splendid voice. I was sitting close by the door to the next room, and the door was standing slightly ajar. I

thought I heard somebody laugh very subdued two or three times, just like they were trying to keep from laughing. Miss Lou was playing very rapidly, her face turned a little from me. No one was in the room but she and I. Suddenly a winter flower fell in my lap. I caught it in my hand and put it in my coat pocket. I did not turn my head. I said to Miss Lou, "That was the finest piece of music I ever heard in my life." But I really never heard a single chord, for my thoughts were on something else. I knew very well where that flower came from. Miss Lou turned and faced me, and said, "You are from Georgia, are you not, Mr. Edwards?"

"Yes, a grand old state; I love my state and my country. I also love the people of Virginia; they are very kind. The army, no doubt, has nearly destroyed Virginia."

"O, yes," she said, "father has lost so much. We have forty negroes here, and they will no doubt be free. Father said they hadn't destroyed so much other property; had not burned up so much."

I changed the subject at this point.

"Miss Lou, I would have been very much pleased to have met Miss Emma."

"Well, you will meet her soon. I think she is looking for an admirer tonight."

Just as she said that, some one rang the door bell. I thought perhaps he was the one. I bid Miss Lou good evening and went out at the other door. I found out I was mistaken. Another officer came there to visit Miss Lou in the afternoon, about four o'clock. But I was glad I left anyway. I went back to my quarters, and took the flower from my pocket. I found she had wrapped a little note very nicely around it. I thought it the prettiest flower I ever looked upon. I was more interested in the note than I was in the flower, so I opened it and read it. She wrote, "I hope you will pardon me; there was a reason in not meeting you, which I hope you will know in the future, although I feel like I have met you, as I was near the door when you came in. Bye, bye."

I want my readers to know just my life as I have written; just what I saw and heard. I can't tell you how I felt, though I will tell you as near as I can. I experienced some things which words may not express in the war.

My kind old colored informant cheered me up next morning when she brought my breakfast by saying that the officer admirer of Miss Emma did not have his admiration returned in kind. The old woman insisted that Miss Emma very deeply admired me. I dared not believe this, however much I wanted to.

The old gentleman and his wife called on me early next morning, and the old gentleman said, "Now, Mr. Edwards, we have a proposition to offer you. You come along now and eat your meals with us, and you can occupy that room I was telling you about; or, if you prefer, you can still remain here at night."

His wife remarked, "We desire very much to have you with us. I believe you have captivated our girls."

"I am very proud to hear that." I was thinking she was wrong. "There are so many officers, I will be compelled to keep close." I saw they were not prepared for that remark.

"Well," he said, "you can come right along and take your meals at the house." I told them I would accept their proposition, and spend the night here at my quarters.

"I don't know but what that will be best; some one may come around to do mischief and I will be near my post."

"Well," he said, "come to your meals when you hear the bell ring."

When I heard the bell, I went right in. I was ready for supper when Miss Lou came out and said, "Well, Mr. Edwards, mamma and papa prevailed at last."

"Yes, I was nearly crazy to come, but I thought I would see if they meant what they said." They all laughed heartily.

The old gentleman said, "I think you have fooled me completely; you talked as though you were very backward in every way."

"I am proud to know that I have fooled you for the best." We all seemed cheerful enough at the table.

I said to Miss Lou, "I feel very much elated. I learn from your mother that I have captured both of her girls. I think I am very apt, indeed, to capture one that I have never seen, only at a distance."

The old man seemed to enjoy the joke very much. Miss Lou, raising her eyes from her plate, said, "Well, Mr. Edwards, I did say you were the handsomest man I had seen from the army."

"Thank you very much, Miss Lou; I hope there will be an opportunity for me yet, if I can get the high-headed officers out of the way." Her mother laughed very heartily. After the meal Miss Lou invited me in the parlor, and we had some fine music. I felt that I was well entertained that afternoon. I felt like I had made a very good impression, though I was not content, but very much demoralized. I excused myself, took my gun and walked out to the lake, the same where we killed so many ducks. I came back, but could not remain in one place very long.

That night, supper being over, I came back in the hall and reached for my hat, when Miss Lou arose and said, "Mr. Edwards, come right in,"

"Thank you, I will go back."

She then prevailed on me to stay, and I stayed longer than I thought. That officer came in another room. I went out with my gun toward the barn and returned to my quarters. I passed by her room; everything was closed up; I stood there about a minute. I heard Miss Lou laughing, somewhere, and passed on. I was satisfied Miss Emma was not in the room, and I felt relieved. I also noticed that the officer did not tarry very long. I strode around and came back. I had never spent such an awful time as I had for the last week or two.

I went to breakfast, and, after eating, came right back. Aunt Sallie came down to fix up my room. She said, "Mr. Edwards, you go around to the pump."

I said, "What is the matter with the pump? I have no business at the pump."

Instead, I took my gun and walked out around below the house. I was going right along when I heard something tap against the window. I discovered it was Miss Emma calling to me.

I had been thinking when I left my quarters that I was the worst fooled boy in General Lee's army. Just to think I had taken up the crazy idea that the girl cared for me. I tell you I was about to "go wild." I knew as little about what I was doing as I ever did before or since in my life. I felt like my heart and body were separated. But still, Miss Emma gave me great relief when she wrote me and said she would give me the reason later why she had not met me. Aunt Sallie said she was so much in love with that officer, and besides, the first day I went to meet the family Miss Lou said she would be out after a short while; but she did not come, and I thought I knew what that meant. Some poet has said, "He is ready to excuse the one he loves." Well, I began to think differently. I was suffering mentally; I could hardly tell where I was or where I was going. One thing, I did not care to go to the front; just anywhere else would answer.

Well, I looked around and saw Miss Emma at the window. She motioned her head for me to come that way, so I turned and strode to the window. She gave me her hand and I held to it without saying anything. Finally she murmured: "I feel like I have met you."

I replied, "I have felt very bad ever since I saw you at the dining room window; I have never had such a feeling deep down in my heart as I have had for you, and I have felt ever since as though I had met you; still I have been greatly troubled."

"Now, Mr. Edwards, please pardon me for the seeming indifference I have shown you."

"It gives me the highest thought of my life to say that I will, because I feel that I know the reason."

"Do you feel that way?"

"I do; you don't know what a great relief that little note and flower gave me. If I could only say that you were mine."

She answered, "You have my whole heart and hand.

When I saw you at that window I came nearer falling than ever before. I saw more in your expression than I will ever see in another."

"You have surely given me the greatest happiness of my life. I will be content as much as possible. I would like to talk to you again later."

"Now, Mr. Edwards, you don't seem a stranger to me. One matter I wish to ask you about—tell me," she hesitated, "tell me why you leave when that officer makes his appearance."

"The military law is such that it compels a private to keep himself away from the officers. The officer might say I was away from my post and maybe I would lose my job."

"Now, Mr. Edwards, you joke. He will come again tomorrow afternoon and he will never darken these doors again. My father and mother have been very much carried away with him, and are desirous that we should marry. For that reason I could not meet you, for I knew I would betray myself before them. They do not know, nor any one else, what has taken place between you and me. I will see you again later. Bye, Bye."

After some time I turned loose her hand. Now let me tell you that was the sweetest hand that I ever touched in my life. I remember the date even now. It was February 10, 1865.

I passed on. The greatest relief of my life was then. And I felt elated—I had held her hand.

One day, not long after, I met the officer in the road about a mile from my lodging place. I had my gun, and was going very quietly along the road. As he came near, I brought down my gun with a salute, but I noticed that he didn't return it.

He halted and said, "Where do you belong, sir?"

"Well, Colonel, I accepted a position out here as a protection for an old gentleman."

"How long have you been here?"

"One month, sir."

"It will be necessary for you to keep yourself closer to your quarters than you have been doing. I have

been told that you are boarding with the family; that you go duck hunting; and that you are spending the balance of your time with the girls, neglecting your business."

"Now, when I need instructions," said I, angrily, "I will go above your rank to get them." He began to get down from his horse, and said, "You had better retract."

I stepped back about two paces and said, "Colonel, I don't know who you are, but you are outside of your duty; you have no jurisdiction over me whatever. I follow instructions; I shall do what I am ordered to do. It will be best for you to get back on that horse."

He mounted his horse, and motioned like he would draw his pistol, but when I brought my gun down he said, "I see that you will do for a soldier. I was just testing you."

"Now, let me tell you," I said, "I don't wish to hear anything you have to say. You just attend to your business and I will attend to mine. You go right on now." And he went.

Some days later I met up with one of General Hill's couriers at church not far from Petersburg, and he said that all was quiet on the line. He saw me at General Hill's quarters when I captured that yankee and recognized me. He told me that he had heard about what happened in the road with the Colonel.

"Oh, yes," I answered. "Do you know that colonel?"

"No, but I heard him talking and laughing how you 'set him up.' The colonel said, 'I tell you I struck the very man down here the other day. I met him in the road. I asked him some questions. He answered very politely. That fellow has "cut me clean out down there." I thought I would play a kind of bluff game on him, but he called it at once. I let that fellow go by.'"

I went to church several times with the old gentleman. One day we all decided to go to church, except Miss Emma. Sunday morning we were all ready. Miss Emma sent me a little note that morning, telling me to inform the others that I would not attend.

Everybody was ready, and I stepped up about starting time. Miss Emma came out to the carriage. Miss Lou said, "Mr. Edwards, I wish to introduce you to my sister."

Miss Emma replied, "I have met Mr. Edwards."

They all began to watch me and laugh. I blushed, and so did Miss Emma. This seemed to amuse her mother very much. Miss Lou said, "I have been noticing you for some time. I have certainly caught up with you. How will you go to church today?" The old gentleman said, "Get right in."

I replied that I was not feeling well. They all knew Miss Emma didn't intend going, as her cousin was visiting her. The little cousin said, "You all go on; Mr. Edwards will stay here with Cousin Emma and me." I said, "All right." They all seemed to be very much diverted. Miss Emma blushed. Miss Lou looked at me. "Oh, yes, I have caught up with both of you." I was somewhat taken back, and was glad when they went out.

Miss Emma and I returned to the house. Just before we went in we saw Aunt Sallie jumping and laughing. Miss Emma remarked, "Just look at that crazy old nigger."

"O yes, O yes, I told you something was going to happen," replied the old negro.

That day was certainly the brightest and happiest day of my life. I have never spent such a day since. I know I would have sacrificed my life for that girl. I felt that I was not mistaken in her love. She proved her great patriotism and love afterwards. I will tell you about that when I get to my life as a prisoner of war. How lovely she was; how true she was; and how good and kind she was.

About half past one o'clock the family returned from church. Miss Emma and I met them at the gate. Miss Lou began to laugh.

"How have you spent the day, Mr. Edwards?"

"The best day of my life."

Then to her sister: "Well, have you enjoyed the day, sister?"

"Oh, certainly, I have."

We all went into the house. Miss Lou went into the room where we had spent the day and turned and said to me, "Mr. Edwards, which chair did you occupy?" I said, "This one," and pointed it out. About that time the little cousin came in and said, "Cousin Emma occupied this one." Miss Lou said, "Your conversation must have been very close, indeed." And it was. The chairs were also very close.

About that time I saw the colonel pass by. Aunt Sallie told me a little further on he met her and asked, "Are they all well, Aunt Sallie?"

"Oh, yes; all happy."

"Is the soldier there yet?"

"Oh, yes, he came to stay until the war closes."

"You tell him I would like to be with him some time soon."

Aunt Sallie said, "No, I can't tell that man nothing. I tell you that man sho' likes Miss Emma. I tell you right now they love one another, and I think they will marry."

"Will you take this note to Miss Emma?"

"No, I am done with that note business. I never expect to take another note for nobody. Let me tell you, all the family likes that man; 'taint no use talking."

Miss Emma and I were expecting to ride out that afternoon. Two nice horses were caught out. Aunt Sallie came out just before we started and was telling what that officer said. Miss Emma said, "I don't wish to hear anything about that," and we mounted and rode away.

Miss Lou and I rode out one afternoon near Petersburg. The cannon began to roar, and she exclaimed, "I can't stand that; let's take another route."

But that afternoon Miss Emma and I went to ride, and took our time to return. Like all happy lovers, we said a great many nice things peculiar to young people in love. I was the happiest man that ever mounted a horse.

One afternoon while riding out I asked her, "What are you going to do when I leave?"

"I will tell you before you leave, Mr. Edwards; please don't talk about leaving. I feel just like when you go I will never see you again."

I replied, "That question will never be solved by you and me. We cannot know the future."

She said, "I wish I could tell what would become of you. I know I will never express myself again to anybody in life as I have to you."

"I can't tell you how I feel towards you," I replied. "Never did I think love was so strong. I feel like I would offer my life to save yours, notwithstanding I will soon return to the front when I receive the order. I feel like we will meet again."

"Oh, if I could feel that I would see you again," she said, feelingly, "it would be the sweetest thought in my great affection for you; and when you return and the war is over, I will give you my hand."

One sad thought encompassed me: To receive orders to report to my command, and that will be very soon. The old gentleman and lady and both their daughters seemed to be much devoted to me; their affection seemed to be very strong, indeed. I felt like before I left them that they were my people. Kindness and appreciation are powerful influences; in fact, they control the world. The old gentleman used all the powers he possessed to influence me to remain there until the war closed, and while urging me said: "I assure you that you will never regret your action; I am perfectly satisfied that the war will close in ninety days. I have a place here where I know no one will ever discover you."

"Well," I said, "I am satisfied that you are really conscientious, and I certainly appreciate your great interest in my welfare. But I, uneducated, left my mother and father, brothers and sisters, and all that was dear to me, that I might go and, if necessary, sacrifice all for my country, for justice."

All I had was my honor and integrity, and the greatest joy that I have today is that I went where

I was ordered and that I never faltered in the performance of a duty. I was there when the third battle was fought; I was there at the last battle at Petersburg, and unfortunately was captured by negro troops.

I will go back to where I left off with the old gentleman. I could not accept his proposition. "After I have served my country this far, I will go to the end, if the Lord will spare me." He carried me through to the end and brought me forty-five years afterwards. Who could have done that? No one but the Lord.

Now, my friends, I was surely between two fires. There was that good family and my great love for Miss Emma, the sweetest and best girl in all the world to me; and I was compelled to turn my back and follow my duty, go to the front, not knowing what would be the result; not knowing but what I would be at Petersburg dead before the sun rose again. I certainly would change your minds to something more than sadness. All that I experienced that day was sad, indeed. This was March 20, 1865.

I did not say to any one that I was looking for orders to return, but I was expecting them every day. It seemed to me it was more than I could stand, to turn and leave that one that was closer to me than any one in the world. I haven't the command of language. Did you, my reader, ever think what great power the love for another was?

Toward the last, Miss Emma and I were together most all the time. The day I received orders of recall she asked me why it was that I looked sad. I replied, "The saddest time of my life is now." I tenderly embraced and kissed her. "The time for you and I to part will be tomorrow—tomorrow morning at seven o'clock."

She arose and ran into her mother's room. "Mother, I can't bear it; I can't give him up. I will never see him again. Let me go to Petersburg with him." Her mother said, "Why, you can't go. How would you look over there with that army of soldiers?" Her father and mother knew we were engaged. They

seemed to be very much affected. I went to my room—I had moved to the vacant room in the house. I never closed my eyes that night. I could hear the sobs of my dearest one all through the night.

The next morning I arose at five o'clock. I went out to my quarters and packed up what little clothes I had, and cleaned up my gun. I met up with old Aunt Sallie. She sure shook me up. I went on to the gate and set my gun down. The bell rang for breakfast. The most dreaded time was close at hand. I passed on to the dining room. I saw the old gentleman and his wife could not control their emotions. Aunt Sallie handed me a cup of coffee; I drank it, and that was all I could take.

I said to the old people, "I will never forget this day. I thank you for the great hospitality and the great kindness shown me since I have been at your home, a private soldier." The old gentleman replied, "I feel proud to tell you, I never expected to meet any one in whom I would have so great a confidence."

I replied, "I hope I will never betray that confidence."

He said, "Everything has been quiet since you have been here; nothing misplaced. I thank you, sir, from my heart." The wife said, "I can't tell, Mr. Edwards, what we will do with Emma. I never heard of any two meeting as you did; just like you had been close friends from the start. I never thought I could make myself so free with any one as I have with you since you came here. Your time here we certainly appreciate. You are young yet. When the war closes, come right here. You will certainly be cared for."

I first told the old people good-bye; then I gave Miss Lou my hand and kissed her good-bye. She said, "Sister is in her room; just go right in."

I cannot describe my feelings. I went in. She was sitting on the sofa. Her great emotion was uncontrollable. I began to think I would never leave her. I bid them all farewell. That was the greatest trial of my life. The family were all in tears. I passed on. The old gentleman had his carriage ready. I went

out and took my seat in the carriage. I went to the front March 24, 1865. I had spent two and a half months at the home of the kind old gentleman.

The next morning the enemy began advancing in front. This was March 25, 1865. Our command was ordered in double quick to meet them. I was a member of the sharpshooters. The line of battle halted. The sharpshooters charged the enemy and drove them back to their works. We fell back a short distance. They charged with their entire line. We fell back some distance again. Our line of battle held them back and finally drove them to their works with heavy loss on both sides.

There was skirmishing for several days. At times the main lines would be engaged. It seemed that the enemy was reinforcing all the time and moving to our right. Our commanders were somewhat confused.

After General A. T. Hill was killed there seemed to be quite a sadness with the boys. He was certainly a great general and a good man. He was killed on the field. His generalship was never surpassed by any one as a corps commander.

I think it was April 1st or 2nd that our entire line of sharpshooters were ordered to a certain place not far from the crater. On a very long bluff we were placed, in works like a half moon. We were slightly elevated and it was a fine position indeed. We could see their entire line in front. All the negro soldiers, about four thousand strong, seemed to be in our front. We were looking, and of course dreaded the consequences. We kept looking; they seemed to be moving about very rapidly. Our line of sharpshooters, five hundred strong, to face that dark cloud of troops.

Our colonel commanding came around and said, "I want every man to have one hundred rounds of cartridges." All hands were sitting waiting to see what they would do. We thought maybe they were going to move somewhere else. I felt like they ought to move from there to some other point. The colonel said, "If they come this way, don't shoot until they get in fifty yards of the line. Be certain to hold your

fire until I give the command to fire. I want you to kill every negro in that line. I have never had negroes to face before. Take particular aim and shoot to kill."

All at once we heard the command, "Forward, forward, men." You could see those negroes mount their breastworks and move up rapidly. You could hear our hearts beat. We knew what that meant. The colonel said, "Boys, don't show your head until I give the command to fire, then rise on your feet and fire at once."

The negroes kept moving up. They were three hundred and fifty yards from our line when they mounted their breastworks. We could see them in the open field. We could see four or five commanders all mounted on white horses; the prettiest shot we had in some time. The colonel said, "Boys, be sure and kill every man on horseback." They kept coming. All we could do was to hold our fire until we heard the command.

The colonel rose: "Ready, fire." We all seemed to shoot at the same time. We couldn't tell what we had accomplished until the smoke cleared away, then we saw just a few turn their backs and go the other way. It looked to me like we had killed about two to each shot. All the white officers on horseback were killed, together with the horses. They returned to their ditch.

In about fifteen minutes they came again. Our colonel said, "Now boys, just as soon as they mount their breastworks commence firing." They came right along just like they meant business. Every man in the line did his best shooting. From the time they left their works, you could see them falling in all directions.

I saw one who seemed to be the largest negro on the line, and saw he was making for a big pine stump. He was sure in a hot place. I raised my gun and fired. He fell, rose about half way up, and fell again. I said to the man next to me, "Kill that nigger; he is using all the power he has to get to that stump." He fired and the negro went down to rise no more. They

came on up, but hardly so far as the first time; then they wavered and turned. Our boys gave that old "Rebel Yell" as they went. That was twice they had been repulsed. I can't tell how many negroes were lying there kicking, but the majority were stilled forever.

Well, in about forty-five minutes they came again. Though a big chance, they decided to flank us. They formed two regiments of white soldiers, one on the right and the other to the left. They reinforced the negro brigade. The colonel said, "I don't think we can stand here but one fire and give those negroes the same chance they had. Don't fire until they get about the same distance they were the first time." Their lines extended a good distance on our right and left.

We wondered where our army had gone. Everything had cleared up and gone from Petersburg, and our little command was there killing negroes. On they came. The colonel said, "Boys, when you fire the first time, fall right back about two hundred yards to that old fort." We did as we were ordered. We dreaded that run. We were exposed to their fire all the way to the fort.

They came up rapidly, and never saw our boys during the whole time. When they were about seventy-five yards away, the colonel said, "Fire." We fired.

Now, my friends, let me tell you how I was promoted. When we gave way to run, I outran everything on our line, and got to the fort ahead of all of them. We lost about fifteen men going to the fort. I outran bullets, men and all, and did not receive a scratch; but I lost my old shoes. I regretted this, and would have turned back, but I reflected that I had no time for shoes just then. About half of our ammunition was out, and my gun was hot. I saw the negroes were getting close by. The colonel said, "Boys, we are compelled to do something right here. We must hold this fort until our ammunition is exhausted."

Just as fast as they would come up we would shoot

them down. We had abattoirs in our front, and we would shoot them down before they could get through.

About that time some one said to throw over these hand grenades, and we let them go. The white soldiers had disappeared somewhere; nothing but negroes were in sight. Our ammunition gave out. I don't think there was a cartridge left. I never saw such heroism as was shown there. I saw we were gone. All our hand grenades were exhausted. There was nothing but dead negroes in all directions around that fort. Although we had holes to shoot through, we lost a great many men. There was not one among us that thought we would escape from the fort alive. I just give up. They left a few of us, and we surrendered. As it happened, two white officers came along about that time. I went out with a white piece of cloth to my gun and held it up. A very large and tall negro came up to me. I had said all during the war that I would die before I would surrender to a negro, but let me tell you, I had forgotten that resolution. I did everything that negro commanded me to do, and I tell you I did it quick. He said, "Throw down that gun, or I will put a ball in you." I had my left coat sleeve off my shoulder, and had my gun in that sleeve, the iron was so hot. He caught hold of my sleeve and gave it a powerful jerk and came very near jerking me down, and tore my coat nearly to pieces. I got it on again somehow. He said, "Damn you, I want everything you got."

I gave him a half plug of tobacco. I thought that would quiet him. He was proud of that tobacco and bit off about half at one chew. He said, "What else," and I gave him my pocket knife. "What else." I gave him all the money I had, \$40 in Confederate currency, and told him that was all. He saw my pipe stem in my coat pocket, caught hold of it, gave it a jerk and nearly threw me down again. I saw he intended to kick me or hit me with his gun. He caught me by the shoulder and shoved me. He certainly intended to kick me as he shoved me, but I made the greatest jump then that I ever made. He missed me about

an inch. I felt the breeze, that was all. "You damn poor devil," he said, "go to the rear." And I went.

I would like to know what my readers think about that negro charge, as I have narrated it. I don't know whether you have the right conception or not. I can't tell you what became of about half our men. I think they went right down the line and then across a big swamp. We lost about two-thirds of our men in some way; we could not account for them. Our colonel was wounded in the body on the way to the fort. I think the negroes took charge of him. It was every man for himself after we came out of the fort. It was all I could do to get loose from the one that captured me.

I passed on back to where we killed so many negroes. I stopped and looked over the ground. I think that at the breastworks and at the fort there were no less than two thousand killed and wounded, mostly dead. After we found our way up to the white troops we were treated very nicely as prisoners of war. They knocked up some barrels of "hard tack" and pickled pork, and we certainly did justice to that.

We were very much surprised at the expressions they used. They said, "Hello, boys, you are very black like you have been killing those damn negroes. We forced them out for you to kill. We don't care if you kill them all out. We all would have been home now had it not been for the damn negroes. Well, boys, the war will close just as soon as reinforcements get around in the rear of General Lee. About sixty thousand troops, just from Washington City, never had fired a gun, the best troops we ever saw." General Lee surrendered about one week from that time.

I was tired, had been fighting all day and had nothing to eat. We camped right there all night. I don't think we had over two hundred men out of five hundred that came out that morning. We fought negroes all day and the yankee army in Petersburg. General Lee was gone. Well, the next morning we went out on the boats toward hell, if you will excuse the expression. It proved to be a veritable hades.

Just before we moved out, all the prisoners present were ordered in line to answer to our names. The officer in command stepped out in front and said, "Well, gentlemen and prisoners of war, I understand one Union soldier, a prisoner, was shot to death in Wilmington yesterday by the Confederate soldiers. We expect to retaliate." Another sergeant came out with a small box in his hand, in which there were several hundred tickets. "Now," he said, "I want every man in this line to draw one ticket from this box." There were about six hundred prisoners. We all drew one. The tickets were numbered. He called out a certain number. "The man that drew that number step out." We all looked to see who the man was that drew the number; no one stepped out; no one seemed to have the number. The officer turned and said, "Gentlemen, you are all very fortunate. I feel considerably relieved. I can't tell you the secret now. Captain, you can forward your prisoners to the boats."

Just before we went aboard, I heard one of the guard say to another, "Those fellows never knew they were drawing for their life this morning."

I have thought a great deal about that drawing, but I never understood it. I thought to myself maybe it would be better to say nothing about what I heard the yankee say. All of our boys wondered, but I always had my opinion.

We all marched on board the vessel. I must say that our treatment as prisoners of war by the white soldiers was very nice. They questioned our boys about the great slaughter of negroes the day before. They stated that about twenty-five hundred were missing, and they seemed to be pretty well satisfied with the result. They were very much surprised that our force consisted of only five hundred men.

I saw where the Merrimac and Monitor engaged in their life and death struggle. We passed by old Fortress Monroe. We could see a great distance out on the Atlantic. This was my first trip on the water. We did not know where we were going. We were subject to their orders, even to send us to the North Pole.

I preferred anywhere but that hell where we landed; pardon the expression. We spent the night on the water with a great cloud of despair and misery hovering over us. Nothing but woe and misery from the first to the last. We were half clad, out on the deep waters of the ocean.

Those seemed to be the darkest days of my life, hard fighting, thirsty, hungry, half clad, no future, our army almost gone, so many of our brave heroes killed on the battlefield, our homes burned, our cities destroyed and we prisoners of war, out on the waters of the great ocean, and did not know where we would land. I don't think you can know or understand our situation; it is beyond description. There was nothing in sight, nothing on earth for us. No pen can write, no tongue can express the horrors of that terrible night. We were not allowed to express our feelings to one another. We could only look on the dark side of life, though we had one of the highest privileges of mankind: "Lord, be our helper, come to our rescue, lift the dark shadow from our eyes and at last save us all."

I tell you my friends I esteemed that the highest honor I could enjoy, to call on our Lord and Maker, the only one to whom we could go for protection.

BOOK TWO.

Bitter Prison Life, Under Guard of Negro Soldiers— An Unexpected Renewal of a Lovely Girl's Interest in a Soldier Boy.

The next morning we drew anchor and steamed away. In the afternoon, about four o'clock, on April 5, 1865, our boat steamed up close to a wharf. "This is Point Lookout; this is your place of confinement," one of our captors said. The white guard left us.

I said, "Who will be our guard?"

They replied, "Negro soldiers will take you to your destiny."

We all said, "Lord, help us."

The negro soldiers came, very much uniformed and very dignified. They commanded us to come out, form a line and answer to our names. We jumped up, went out and formed a line. The roll was called; two men were missing. The captain went around to the captain of the boat and said, "Two men are missing."

"They jumped overboard last night and were drowned," was the reply.

"All right." The negro captain said, "Right face, march; file up to the colonel's quarters."

We all registered our names. They took everything we had and nothing was ever returned to us. We could see the great walls of the prison at a distance.

"Right face, forward, march," commanded the negro captain. "Damn you, step up there in front, or you will get this bayonet." I tell you, our boys stepped along. "File left; can't you see that gate. Get in that gate. You will never beat another negro." We passed through the gate. "Now, I'll pull the bridle off; go."

We found about twenty-five thousand prisoners on ten acres of land, which, of course, made it very much crowded. I passed on to the lower side. I thought I would step up to the wall and see how far it was to the Chesapeake Bay. I heard several of the men saying, "Come back! Come back! You will get killed. Don't you see that ditch; don't step across that ditch or you will be killed."

I was just in the act of stepping over the ditch; only two more steps to carry me over. I looked up and saw a negro guard ready to shoot me when I stepped over. They said nothing to a prisoner. If one stepped over that ditch he was shot without a word. I was in there only ten minutes and came very near getting shot. I stepped back from the ditch.

We were all assigned to different wards in the prison. The walls were thirty feet high, with a platform on top four feet high, with banisters on each side. About one hundred negroes walked that platform night and day.

There were six small pumps on the ground and twenty-five thousand men to get water. Sometimes the pumps needed adjusting, but there was no one to look after them. Once while very thirsty I thought I would step down to the pump. I saw a thousand men doing all they could to get water. After awhile I crowded in. Every time I placed my cup under, some other fellow would knock it away, and it was only now and then that I would get about half a swallow. Finally I gave it up. I was nearly exhausted, and decided I would go back to my little old tent and perhaps I could get water at night.

I fixed up my tent so it would hold, but a very light wind would blow it over. The prisoners had to look after themselves, for there was nobody to show anything. I saw one or two of our crowd with no place to go. I said, "If you will help me fix this old tent, three can stay here." They helped and we tented together all the time. I was hungry and thirsty and I did not get any supper the first night.

The little paths about four feet wide they called

streets. There were two large gates to the prison. One gate led out to the Chesapeake Bay; a fine place to bathe and wash your clothes. We had no change, and had to wash what we had on in the bay. We had no soap or fire. Sometimes we would wash our clothing and spread them on the ground, let them dry a little on one side and then on the other. Sometimes we would wash them and put them right on again.

I came back that first night to see if I could get water. I went out to the pump and took my cup along. At about ten o'clock I reached out my cup and got it about half full—about half a pint.

A great many soldiers had been there all during the war; they had been there so long they were nothing but gamblers. I tell you when our old regulars got started out after them they had to get out from there. They had all sorts of money, gold and silver. They had been there three or four years, and were fat and sleek and had comfortable huts. Our boys would go right in and take all their money, all their clothing and tell them to get out.

I was told to watch; that the negroes would shoot me down after dark when I had gotten water; that one had to go straight to his tent; so I went straight to mine. I had my head out, and saw a negro come walking down the street. He said, "Take that skull cap back in that tent." I obeyed his order.

They rang the bell for breakfast. I soon caught on to that. We went down to a very long house that was used for a dining room. We all went in and took our seats on long benches. We ate out of tin plates, and these very close together. Sometimes you would hear the negroes sing out, "Close up, there." Sometimes, through mistake, our fellows would leave one plate between them, and sometimes on purpose. As they had the plates all numbered, it was next to impossible to fool them.

One morning two of my crowd left one plate between them; one of those negroes came to where they were sitting, caught hold of one by the shoulder and jerked him backwards right on the floor and kicked

and hit him several times. One of our crowd was very game. He was from Montgomery, Ala. He jumped up from the table, knocked the negroes flat on the floor and jumped on them with both feet. I tell you blood streamed. About that time they all grabbed him and took him out and put him on the buck-and-gag frame; then they tied him down; a sharp stick was stuck in the roof of his mouth and the other end rested on or near his tongue, very hard; they then bound his limbs together and he remained in this condition one hour.

We got up from the table and went out. The negroes came up and began making threats. I tell you we were about ready to jump on them and disarm them. About that time the colonel and two other white officers came along and asked what was the matter. Our boys began to tell them. The colonel said, "We will investigate this matter." He went out to where the man was "bucked," the bloodiest man you ever saw. He cut him loose. The man could hardly stand. The colonel said, "Take this man down to the hospital for treatment. Now, I want fifteen witnesses that saw this difficulty." He wanted fifteen negroes. Only ten saw it. "Well, now, I want five from the prisoners." They were present. Ten negroes and five prisoners were the witnesses. I did not see the difficulty; I was away with a small piece of bread. I was very hungry, even after eating that bread, and was somewhat excited. The colonel said, "I don't care to hear anything more about the difficulty; just close right up." The negroes that were in the difficulty were discharged and our own men were in charge of the dining room after that. I never heard of the man that was gagged after he was sent to the hospital.

I looked after myself, and that was all I could do. I went to my tent, and walked around to see what manner of place it was. I saw a great many sick men lying there in their old pieced tents. No one around them. Sometimes you would see them carried to the hospital, and there die of bone scurvy. I could see hundreds reeling as they went to the well for water,

and I have often given our boys water that could not get to the pumps.

In the afternoon, I stepped out to the bay, where I could see oyster fishing going on. They had sail boats with drag nets. I saw one man out about two hundred yards bathing. I saw him go down; he rose and screamed out, "Shark!" He went down again, and I saw his foot kicking to get loose from the shark. The man-eater had him and was going out to sea. I was told the sharks drowned and ate a great many. I was very careful where I went after that, endeavoring to find out the location of all the dangerous places.

I saw a crowd of men standing in a bunch, and as I approached them, I saw a man lying on the ground, breathing his last. He had been shot by a negro the night before. No one knew the man. At all times through the night you could hear a gun shoot. Those negroes shot at random, it seemed. As our boys were close together they hardly ever missed striking some one. Late one night I had just gotten from my pallet and was sitting in my tent. I was cold and had nothing to spread over me. I heard a gun fire. The ball struck the tent pole just above my head, glanced and struck my tent mate's canteen, close to his head, making a little noise. He jumped up and said, "Are you shot?" "No," I replied. He looked and found that his canteen was shot through and through. "How come that?" "Some one shot over this way, hit that tent pole and the ball glanced over there." He was badly frightened. We did not sleep again that night.

Every day at ten o'clock the bread wagons came in. All prisoners were moved away from that gate, as no one was allowed near there when the wagons came in. If you were under forty yards from the gate, those negroes would come up and give you a kick with their foot. Sometimes our boys would be very hungry and weak, standing and looking for the bread wagon, and would sometimes reel as they walked; and when they could not get out of the way as quick as the others, the negroes would send them over on their head. No one dared to remonstrate, knowing he

would get the same treatment. Sometimes, for some reason, the bread wagon would be from two to four hours late. The poor fellows would crowd up all around for two hundred yards back, surging, pushing, to see. They were so hungry and weak, and their anxiety was so great, it seemed they were almost crazy for bread.

I could live where a great many would have perished to death, as I never ate much. Still I was very hungry indeed. I saw men stand and look so wistful and get so weak that they would sink right down to the ground and be stepped on by others surging to see the bread wagon come in. After awhile it would come, bringing in the "glad tidings of great joy." Notwithstanding the small amount that was issued, that was our life, our greatest desire; one little morsel would be so sweet. It did seem to me that the greatest strains of my life, mentally and physically, were the times when the bread wagon was delayed.

I have been on post in the army when it seemed my time would never come to be relieved. But there is no comparison, my friends. You place a man where there is no water and where there is scarcely anything to eat and keep him there, and I know of no greater punishment. I saw men standing around there trembling. Sometimes they would fall and had to be helped to their feet. I saw a man going around with bone scurvy; these boys were nothing but skin and bones. It seemed that all love or sympathy for any one was gone. If you were sick or happened to an accident, you got very little assistance. There was the negro guard that you were compelled to keep your eye on, or he would shoot you. You never knew when you were out of danger.

A small storm came up one day and blew our tents all to pieces. There were a great many sick men who had no protection. They lay with nothing over them. Maybe next day they were carried out dead. You could see them at all times of the day moving out the sick and wounded; a great many killed and wounded from gun shots at night; while a great many of them

would die a natural death. You were in danger at all times.

The big gate that opened out to the bay was open all day; at sunset this was closed; you had to be inside at sunset. If you were outside when the gate was shut you would remain there until next morning, guarded there all night. The negro guards would give you, "Hail Columbia," curse you and tell you the bottom rail was on top now. And you would have to stand there and take it, not daring to do anything.

I will tell about our rations. Two meals a day, morning and night. The breakfast was a small piece cut across a five-cent loaf of bread, a small cup of beef water, which made me sick when I drank it. I would take my bread and go out. We would get this twice a day, nothing else. We saw no meat of any kind. The beef water was very filthy, being covered with bugs and flies, but our boys would eat anything, as any man will when he gets hungry enough. We would rake the insects out and drink it, and go on and think about the next time and how long it would be before we would get the next meal.

Several times they would give us half a pint of raw meal, and we were not allowed fire with which to cook it. We just mixed it with a little water, stirred it up and drank it down. It gave us all cholera morbus.

The first raw cup of meal I ate came very near taking my life. It seemed to me I was never so sick. At midnight I began to vomit. There was a small ditch about three feet away and I put my head over in that ditch, and I think I must have fainted. The guard came along and said, "Take that head back in that tent." I vaguely heard him, but I never moved. He repeated the command. The man that was with me jerked me by the heels back into the old tent. Then I was at myself. I know I fainted. I barely heard his command. He brought his gun down on me, and my companion pulled me back just in time. Several of our number were taken out the next morning who had died from the effects of the meal.

Sometimes the white officers would be away. We

were told the negroes would exchange the bread for meal to make the prisoners sick and kill some of them. There is no telling what else was added. They would do anything to hurt us at any time.

The water we drank tasted more like cod fish than anything I ever tasted. It seemed to me I would heave when I drank it. It had a very foul odor. The stockade was in a low flat place. It rained very often there and we would get very wet. It was as muddy as it could be, and nowhere to go to avoid it. On rainy nights we had to sit up and sleep. I used a puncheon to sit on and sleep; it was too wet to lie down on the ground. I was never sick, except when I ate raw meal, and then I was very sick.

I don't believe there is a prison on earth to compare with this wartime bastile. The horrors and inhuman treatment we received at the hands of the negro soldiers at Point Lookout, Delaware, was terrible. They decided we were to blame for all the bad, and that they would avenge it. I was walking close to the wall one day, when I looked up at the guard and stopped. I desired to ask a question. He said, "Don't you be looking at me, you long-headed white devil; move up." I obeyed that order very quick. I looked back. "Don't you look at me," he again commanded. And I did not.

Let me say a word about the dining room and the boys in there. They were detailed out of prison to wait on our men and keep everybody straight. They were very fat, indeed, and getting very much inflated with egotism, and they tried to exercise a great deal of authority. One day they began to issue commands like the negro soldiers; to curse and tell our fellows they would report them to the negro officers.

Of course, we did all we could to obey the rules of the dining room, but, you know, my comrades, how mean and commanding our nurses and cooks would get in the army. They had been there some time. One day two of our sick men came in, very weak and feeble, and fell over on the table and broke two or three plates. Up stepped the head boss. He

was one of our sort, but he was over the others in there, and, with an oath, he said, "I will report you fellows for that to the negro officers." Well, two or three of our boys decided on a plan to get him away from the dining room.

A day or two later some one told him there was a letter outside for him. He asked, "Where is that letter? I would like very much to see that letter. I expect it is from the post commander about that difficulty. I have reported the crowd."

About that time two or three men grabbed him. They threw him down, and tied his hands and feet. He began to beg. He saw they had him. I never saw such a beating as they gave him. They held up a little, and one asked, "Did you report that sick man to the negro officer?" Then they started to beating him again, and I began to think they would kill him. They finally untied him and let him up. "Now, if we hear any more, we will fix you for good next time."

We never heard anything more from the man anywhere. I think he went to the hospital. He was an old rat, and had been there for years. I tell you those others were extremely quiet after that, and we had no more trouble. The negroes on the post would holler out, "Give it to him; we know him, and he is mean."

It came my turn to go out and cut old slabs of wood to cook our bread. This was my first time to cut wood. Twelve prisoners were detailed for the work. We were formed like guard mounting, with each one of us numbered. Eight negroes guarded us. The negro sergeant said, "Right face! I want every man to keep step." I always kept step, but I made a little stumble over a little stump. The stumps were very close, indeed, and I came very near falling on the next fellow. One of the negroes rushed up and kicked me severely; kicked me over two or three men. They caught me and kept me from falling. He said, "Now, damn you, stand up." I was weak, as I had had nothing nourishing to eat. In fact, all of

our boys were very weak, indeed; not strong enough to cut wood.

We went out about two miles, close to the water, and cut up old rafts. We cut a great deal of wood that day. When we were through our hands were very badly blistered. About five o'clock we stopped. "Form line! Right face! Forward, march." Just about the same place where I fell, another man fell. He fell against another man's heel and knocked out two front teeth. "Don't kick him, for that will do him," said the negro officer. That was my first and last time to cut wood.

We had some difficulty nearly every day. The greatest hero in that prison was from Houston, Texas. One day he quietly remarked: "I have never been out to cut wood, and I hope I never will. I expect to stay and obey their orders if possible." That ground was a very rough place, indeed. Almost every morning there was some disturbance at the gate. It was a hard matter to walk in line, for some one continually stumbled. And when one stumbled he was certain to get a kick. Well, this Texan said: "If I am detailed to cut wood I will kill the first negro that kicks me." All the boys heard what he said. They were very anxious to see him go out. Every morning they would crowd around the gate to see if he went out, and by and by he did go.

Accidentally, he stepped on the heel of his trousers. They were torn at the heel just enough to hang a little. He fell halfway down, and came very near hitting the guard as he fell. That negro stepped right up and gave him a very severe kick. The Texan turned very quick, jerked the negro's gun from him, shot him down and plunged his bayonet clear through another negro and twisted it around. The negroes seemed to be frightened. They stood about four seconds before they fired on the Texas, and then they shot him dead. A regular rebel yell went up when the negro was shot.

That put a stop to the kicking. It seemed to bring

about a little more quiet at the barracks also, and more especially our side.

The soldiers were going out all the time after General Lee surrendered. They took the oath of allegiance before the time came for all. Old citizens tried to get me to take the oath and come out. They offered me \$40 and board as long as I desired. I said to them I could not. I had suffered a great deal, but I expected to take the oath when the right time came. That time came after awhile. I was determined to go out honorably. And I did.

It was awful to see the number of dead soldiers going out every day, most of them from bone scurvy; their limbs would perish away. This was very painful, indeed. I have seen them lie and moan all night, and no water to give them. I tell you, I am not exaggerating when I say we cared for nothing only for something to eat and water to drink. It seemed to me that if I only could have had plenty to eat and water to drink I would have been content even with the other sufferings.

One day I went to the pumps to get water. Just as I came up, I saw two men at the pumps, shoving and pushing. Finally one, a Mexican, got his cup under the flow of water; the other, an Indian, knocked it out of his hand. I have seen men knock one another down in the mud. You could see men fighting any way you looked, and some of them got hurt very badly. Well, that Mexican stepped out of the way and called that Indian. The Indian stepped out. The Mexican said, "Now, I am going to whip you or you whip me right here."

The Indian said, "Boys, make a ring and let no one come inside that ring."

Of course, the boys made the ring. They made a choice of five men each as seconds. No one was allowed to interfere; nor to separate them. It was to be a fight to the finish. They agreed to fight, one for the North, one for the South. The negro guard heard the agreement. They seemed to be very much enthused. The Indian chose the North and the

Mexican the South. The hospital doctors came out on a nearby housetop. The fight began. The Mexican hit the first blow, but did not knock the Indian down. The Mexican was all fire, while the Indian seemed to be very quiet at first, but finally knocked the Mexican flat. He arose very quickly. The negroes roared when the North knocked down the South.

They fought for one hour. When they got very tired, one would say, "Hold up; rest awhile." One would sit on one ditch-bank, while the other would fall back on the other bank, and rest five minutes. I never saw such bloody men by the time they finished, and they had torn their clothing to pieces. I walked away, I did not care to see any more. Later I returned. Just as I came up they each fell back on the ditch-banks facing each other. The Mexican said, "Let's make friends." The Indian gave him his hand, and so they made friends. The Mexican said, "We will go to the sutler's tent and treat." The Mexican had greenbacks, and they went. The Mexican gave him as much bread as he could eat, and the Indian ate four ponies before he would quit. The North and the South made a draw fight.

Our men in prison were of all kinds. They did not care for anything. Never was there such fighting as was done in that prison. I was actually ashamed of our men. I felt like it was a disgrace to Southern soldiers. We separated them when we saw they were going to get hurt. One fellow from Alabama thought of a good plan. He sent one morning for all the stewards of the different wards to report to his tent. He had a way to stop so much fighting. He said, "We have been separating the men that fought every day, and they have found out they will get protection. So just go back and report to the men they will get no protection when they get to fighting." Well, it worked like a charm. There was no fighting; they received no protection. I expect we give some people too much protection here now.

When my mind reverts to that horrible prison I

wonder why we were kept there so long after Lee had surrendered and the armies had gone home. I have never been able to account for it yet.

I tell you it was a close call in that prison. There were no friends; no one you especially cared to converse with; no one cared if you got sick; and not a drink of water could you get. It seemed that there was no future; everything was dark indeed.

One day the negro guard came up the street inquiring for Frank Edwards, of Georgia. I answered. "Come and go with me to headquarters," he said. I went to the commandant's quarters. I went right in.

"Where are you from, sir?" I was asked.

"General Lee's army, sir."

"Well, what state?"

"Georgia."

"What regiment and company?" I told him.

"Did you ever act as protector for an old gentleman in the country, in Virginia?"

"I did."

"Well, sir, you have one good friend in that home—your best girl. Here is something she asked me if I would see that you received, and I said I would at the risk of my life. Here is a five-dollar gold piece she sent you. I spent the night at that home night before last. I never was so well entertained. Your command passed by that home and she learned you were captured or killed. I informed them that you were captured and carried to Point Lookout, Delaware, and that you were there. That is why she sent you this money. She said, 'Will you carry him a note?' 'I would be glad to, but we are not allowed to do so. However, I will tell him what you say.' 'Tell him,' she said, 'that I regret, indeed, that he was captured, and to use this money for his comfort, and that I hope he will be released very soon.'"

No one can imagine how I felt. I thanked the officer for his kindness. I felt like that money was a godsend. That money saved my life. I used five cents every day for bread; that kept me on my feet. I was

so much relieved, and it was bliss to know it came from that sweet girl; to know she thought of me.

I began to look around me to see if I could make a little money. I used fifty cents of the money to buy an outfit to make gutta percha rings. I bought this little outfit from an old vet who had been there a good while. After awhile I had six rings ready for sets. I had ten cents in silver. I beat that out very thin, indeed. I soon had sets in them. I was at work on those rings most every day for two months, though I was so nervous I could hardly do anything. When they were finished they looked very nice. I had three sets on each one of them—silver dominoes and hearts. I was very proud of my rings.

Anything that was made by the old Rebs (as they called us) at Point Lookout was a prized relic. I was very much afraid somebody would get them. I got a little stick to string them on. I thought I would sell them for five dollars each. Those New Yorkers would come down occasionally, reconnoitering around, just to see what they could find. I was on the lookout for them. They were delighted at coming to Point Lookout to see those four-footed animals; they thought the old rebels were some kind of ferocious beasts.

Well, one day some of them came riding around the driveway. I thought this the time for me to dispose of my rings. I had everything planned out, even to what disposition I would make of my money. All the boys were coming up to see the trade. I went right up to a carriage in which there were three ladies and three men. I motioned for them to stop, but they ignored me. They drove a little further on, and looked all around. One of the ladies appeared very much interested in me. It had been some time since I had the opportunity to speak to a lady. She kept on talking to me. From her manner I was certain I had made one sale. I handed her my stick of rings. They said they were the prettiest lot of rings they had ever seen made in prison. There were six of them in the carriage, and I had six rings. They were all

finally fitted. I was standing there ready to receive my money for the rings. By that time there were five thousand soldiers standing around looking at us; but most of them were looking at the ladies. I was standing as straight as a line, without hat or shoes, and my hair was very long. More than half of the prisoners were barefooted.

The lady I had been talking to would look at my feet and then at the rings. I thought finally she would give me a pair of shoes for one ring. There was one lady in the carriage whose looks I did not like; she looked deceitful. Finally she said, "Drive on, Jim." He drove away at a rapid pace to the gate. I received nothing for my rings. My comrades became an enraged crowd, and every one of them rushed right after them around to the gate. They drove out in a very great hurry. The negro guard told us to get back or he would shoot right into our ranks. We did not separate as quickly as he wished. One of the negroes threw some kind of explosive right on our boys. It exploded close to one man's foot, tearing his pants and his leg from ankle to knee joint. He was carried to the hospital, where he died the next morning, poisoned from that explosive. The guards kept such on hand to stop any disturbances.

I was a very angry man. They trapped me that time. I was in one trap and I could see no crack to get out. This was the prison.

My comrades and friends, we loved our country, our state, our homes and firesides. We loved our men as Confederate soldiers. No greater honor can be paid to the men of the South than to say they are the sons of Confederate soldiers. The women of the South, too, share in the honor. You may read carelessly, or you may read and forget, and may think that after forty-five years, you have heard so much you do not care to hear any more, but I feel sure that at least the soldiers will agree with me in what I have said.

The soil trod by a patriot is holy ground, and though his banner may be overwhelmed, and his cause de-

feated, yet his memory and his example will go down as a benediction to his people.

Let us say wherein we failed, and wherein we did not fail. We failed to establish the Confederacy. Why? For no other reason than that God decreed otherwise. The military generalship was not at fault. It was not because the Confederate soldier faltered or failed to go where he was ordered, but it was not God's will that a great nation like the United States should be divided. It was the cause of liberty, the cause of justice, that fired our souls. For this we felt it our duty to do and to die. We left our homes in defense of justice, willing to stand and die in front of the enemy; willing to go into unknown dangers and face the greatest suffering possible for man to bear. That was at Point Lookout; nothing ever surpassed that prison from a human standpoint. The Federal prisoners at Andersonville were not the recipients of such inhuman treatment. I do not approve and will not try to justify any government in mistreating prisoners of war; it makes no difference as to the cause of the war, it will not justify any government to persecute the prisoners; to retaliate upon a man that has surrendered everything himself and said, "I am subject to your command," is cowardly. He should be fed and treated within the bounds of reason.

The North has the history of Andersonville and other prisons of the South; they have a most inhuman history of the terrible scourging at Andersonville. I wish it known that I do not approve of such inhuman treatment, whether to an enemy or not. A prisoner is subject to your command; a great responsibility rests upon the captor from a humane standpoint. I believe God will avenge the misuse of a prisoner.

There was President Davis, at Fortress Monroe, under the command of General Miles, who was compelled to get down and suffer himself to be chained; but he was perfectly submissive. If General Miles had seen anything in the actions of President Davis that were not such as those of a prisoner of war should be, he would have had a perfect right to punish him

for disobedience. General Miles executed the order received from his government.

Suppose General Miles had taken occasion to step up and kick President Davis and abuse him severely. Don't you know he should have, and probably would have, been severely punished. When his orders were executed he had no further power.

Those negroes at Point Lookout took the law into their own hands and satisfied their ambition to kick or knock down the Confederate soldiers, who were white men, and to say anything they desired in the way of rebuke. I thought to myself, "If I am ever permitted to get back to Georgia again I will kill six negroes. I have never killed any one yet, and hope I never will be compelled to kill any one. Those negroes up there were desperately vicious. We have very few like them down here; I have never met with one of the kind here in the South; if I do, on slight provocation I will do my best to kill one. I think our negroes here do very well, considering all things.

BOOK THREE.

Closing Incidents of the Terrible Four Years—The Return Home—Several Bits of Human Nature.

I don't wish to exaggerate about the body pest. The old soldier knows whereof I speak. That was one reason we could not get a good night's rest in the army. I washed my clothes every day; I did my best to keep clean. There were all kinds of men there, rich and poor, though you never saw any difference there; they were all the same so far as wealth was concerned. I saw a good many going around with their shirt collar and sleeves unbuttoned, their necks and wrists bloody where they had been bitten. I have thought of the great pest of Pharaoh, the pest of frogs and flies, but I don't think they were any greater than the body pest at Point Lookout, because that pest lasted four years; you could see them crawling over the prisoners, they were on the ground, on the tents, on the pumps, the dining room, and everywhere you looked.

Just think about it a minute; lying there sick, not able to help yourself, not able to get water and scarcely anything to eat; lie there until you were nearly dead, and then maybe they would take you to the hospital and maybe you would die the next day. That pest was awful to think about. You were compelled to sleep by the force of nature; and when you awoke you would get good exercise for a few minutes. Everywhere you looked you would see the greatest woe and misery. You could hear the boys at all times in the night cursing those pests. The white officers would not come near the prison walls. The doctors would redress every time they visited the sick, and

they made only one visit a day, and that a very short one.

Think of the great evils of warfare; great responsibility rests upon the leaders. The ones that instigated the war never fired a gun, hardly heard a shell.

I saw in that prison the greatest hunger. I hope I will never witness the like again. There were men there, as I have said, making money, had been there three or four years, who didn't care to go back or be exchanged from prison. They gambled all the time. They could get fresh fish, oysters or anything else they desired to eat. They were looked upon as trusties. The negro guards would furnish most anything for money.

On one occasion those negroes furnished these men bountifully with a great many sorts of food. They had them all packed away very nicely. Our boys charged in, took all they had packed away, then forced the men out, took their money, forced them to sign another order, then gave the order to the negro they had been doing business with. The negroes came up with all the bill of rations. They then forced them to settle the bill, the negro received his money and returned to his post. Well, the boys gave him orders to get out, and if he ever said anything to that negro or to any one else, they would take his life on the spot. He went out.

I saw men go around the tents, pick up fish bones or any kind of bone thrown away, and beat them up fine, empty the bones in a tin cup with water in it, let it stand awhile and then drink it. I even saw sick men at this. They drank gruel made of cold water. By this the prisoners were getting very thin and lean.

It seemed to me that since I was brought to the place I had no love or sympathy for anything. I cared for nothing; all I cared about was something to eat and water to drink. I am satisfied that for weeks I thought of nothing but something to eat and water to drink. We never noticed the other fellow. All we could do was to go round and round.

About July 1, 1865, the rations were reduced again.

The men would go to the gate and beg for bread, "Give us bread, please bring us the bread."

On July 10, 1865, a great many of the boys went out on oath. Everybody all over the South, prisoners and all, took that oath. I just thought if I could get plenty of something to eat and water to drink I would stay there all my life. They called our names alphabetically. They commenced at A and went down to E. They then began at Z and went back up to E. When my name was called there were just a few in the prison. Nearly all had gone home.

I can look back and see that we all underwent a change in mind, in body and everything. We were in the condition that we had just as soon take a man's life as to look at him.

One day a prisoner went out to cut wood. He came back with a willow limb full of green leaves. You never saw such a demonstration as was made over that willow limb. It had been so long since we had seen anything green. We never looked for anything except for the bread to come in at the gate. We could see nothing except the prisoners, the negroes and the waters of the Chesapeake.

Out of Prison.

But thank God our time had come to go out. We had been punished severely, mentally and physically. We could hardly realize we were going home. "Is it possible we are preparing to leave this hell?"

One day about noon I heard some one call my name. I never listened to find out from what state. I had nothing to pack up; all I had was on my back. The negro guard came out the gate with us. I stepped into the office of the commandant.

"What is your name, sir?"

"J. F. Edwards, sir."

"What state?"

"Georgia."

"Here, guard, take this man around there to the prison lockup. I have a good mind to punish you se-

verely, trying to defraud the next man. I called J. F. Edwards from North Carolina. There you come from Georgia. Now you see what you get."

"Well, I answered to the name of J. F. Edwards; that was all I heard."

"You're a damn liar." And then to the guard, "Did you tell this man J. F. Edwards from Georgia?"

"No, sir, I said from North Carolina."

"That settles the matter," said the officer.

"Will you please give me your name and address?" He refused. "You have all the advantage, at this time; I hope I will see you again, sir."

About that time the colonel commanding came in. "What are you all holding this man here so long about? Now you get out from here; I was of a mind to dismiss you yesterday." He did as he was ordered. He kept looking back nodding his head. I gave him the wink. I stood there waiting for my doom. About that time the brother of the officer that was discharged came in. He was almost as mad as I was.

"Colonel, I think you have violated the rules of this post," he said.

"You may consider yourself under arrest. I am the commander of this post. Guard, take this man to the marshal's court room."

I was beginning to get a little nervous. The Colonel said, "Guard, go and tell the Major to come here quick." He came right in.

"I want you to get here and deliver the oath to the men here in a hurry."

"All right, sir."

He turned to me, "What's your name, sir?"

"J. F. Edwards."

"What state?"

"Georgia."

"What regiment and company?"

I told him.

"Are you ready to take the amnesty oath to the United States?"

"Yes, sir, I am."

"You speak like you are glad of the opportunity."

"Anywhere else, but here," I replied. He and the Colonel laughed very heartily.

I was standing there in my shirt and pants, nothing else. "Your clothing seems to be torn very badly. Colonel, see what an American soldier will do for his country."

The Colonel replied, "Better soldiers never lived than the Confederate soldiers."

"Hereafter we will forever fight together, if necessary," the Major said.

"The Major and myself are from Maryland; those men I discharged are from Massachusetts, real haters of the South. My brother served as Captain of the Maryland Artillery in the Confederate artillery."

"One-half of them were killed," I said.

"Very few escaped. I served in the Federal army. Now, gentlemen, I hope you will all get home safely."

"Thank you, gentlemen."

My friends, my feelings towards the first officer are beyond your conception. I could have killed him and burned him.

Just think of the great difference in those three men. And what a mean heart that first officer had—was going to send me to the prison house because of a mistake in answering to my name. He paid no attention to what I said. If that oath had been taken before we had that little difficulty, I think I would have sent him home. He had all the advantage of me; I was still a prisoner; he provoked me all that he could. I was tempted to strike him anyway. He saw I was holding up very well. The next man never questioned me in any way, only where I was from. I decided if the guard said anything to me about that mistake, I was determined to hit him in the mouth. I found he was somewhat shy of me. The other boys were very calm, but I was mad when he called me a damned lie; he was outside of his bounds. And then, too, those mean negroes had been cursing me, but I was so overjoyed at being released from that hole, that

fool had to take a kick at me. Still, I suppose all things worked for the best for me.

I had been in prison nearly six months after the surrender. We all drew our rations, two pounds of pickled pork and two very large pones of corn bread. I sat right down by a large stump and started to eating my bread and meat. I ate every piece of it before I arose. Before I finished, two negroes came along. They looked at me, and one of them said:

"Look at the damn fool killing himself."

The other one said, "Let him go to hell."

I was compelled to take it, they had their guns and I had nothing to defend myself except that bread and meat. When I had finished I felt stronger. I drank a great draught of water. I hardly thought where I was going, except to get away from that place; there was plenty of time to think of my course after I got started. I felt good; you can never realize how I felt. We boys that were there will never be able to tell our feelings at that time.

The time to get aboard the vessel was four o'clock in the afternoon. The vessel was crowded. Two of the boys and myself decided to wait until eight o'clock the next morning.

Bound for Home, Sweet Home.

I can never express my feelings as I went aboard that vessel. I went on deck where I could see the green briars and the pretty woods along the banks of the Potomac. I had never had such a glad heart, besides all this pretty view, and we were going home. One of the boys that was in the company with me just yelled at the top of his voice, "How do I feel! Ho, I will see my mother again." We three together were rejoicing that we had gained the greatest victory of the war, that we had escaped from that terrible prison, Point Lookout, Delaware.

Now, after forty-five years have passed, I cannot hold back the strongest emotions while I am writing in my blundering way. If I desire to tell anything of my feelings, it was when I was going down the pretty waters of the Chesapeake. I could hardly real-

ize that the war was over until I was released from that terrible place. You will never know what our boys suffered at that terrible prison. I wish that I had command of language sufficient to write that you might understand what the boys suffered there. Before I was released from that prison, it seemed that the days and nights were all the same; it seemed that the sun shone no brighter than the moon. I felt that my life was nothing but misery and woe; that I would never meet another friend. My whole thought was, just give me something to eat and drink and I would spend my life there. No one but those who were there will ever know what our eyes saw and what our hearts felt. Our heart, soul and body would plead to be released from that place. The prayers that went up from that prison were from the heart. If I ever prayed, it was at Point Lookout, and nothing but the mercy of our Lord released us alive from that prison.

When I left that prison, I felt that I was the happiest boy that ever breathed the air of Heaven and of freedom. No one can appreciate the life of a free man, unless he has been in prison. A free man is a privileged character! he has the same right as any other man; he can go to church and worship the living God, or worship Him under his own vine and fig tree; the right to do a legitimate business anywhere in this broad land. He enjoys the greatest freedom that belongs to any man in the world.

And I thought to myself, I am a free man, have a perfect right to defend myself anywhere against anything; our laws will give me justice; if you are imposed upon, our laws will protect you; our laws will protect you financially and politically, protect you in all your liberties. I have been in a place where I could say, "If I owned the whole state of Georgia, legally, had a perfect right to deed it away, I would have given the whole state to be released from that prison at Point Lookout, Delaware, and let me go free, get away from there, proclaim once more that I was a free man. There is no word in the English

language, or any other, that will compare with the word freedom.

When I had taken the oath to protect and defend the Union and the Constitution of the United States, the officer said, "You are a free man." Those words ring in my ears yet. When you hear the deadly sounds of the great cannons of our lines and also from those of the enemy, sounds on the right and on the left, and maybe in the center, men will cry for peace, for freedom; will cry for water, but there is no water; will cry for bread, but there is no bread. I feel it to be a great honor to say we, the we indicates that I was there, that I served my country together with them, that I know the secret that will never be told, only felt by the old soldiers; Generals Lee, Jackson, Johnson, Hill, Gordon, Longstreet, Hood and all of the heroes died with that secret in their bosom; and it will never be told.

We sailed on down the beautiful waters of the Chesapeake, very quiet and still. Every now and then the boys would holler out, "Where are you going?" and would receive the answer, "I am going home, home, sweet home, the sweetest place on earth, home, sweet home." The boys would slip up behind me and say, "Where are you going?" "We are going home to see our sweet mothers." How good we felt.

Even now I can hardly restrain my feelings while I write. It all seems to appear to me now as it did that day forty-five years ago. I can still rejoice in that day, moving over the smooth waters, a free man. Can you rejoice with me for awhile? I feel like you do. That was a great day with us when we could say, "We are free men."

There were three of us together, none over twenty-one years of age. We were together in prison, together when the oath was administered, together when we were made free, together on the journey home.

We sailed on to the deep blue waters of the Atlantic. Nothing but water, water everywhere. We are free, that clothed our body, clothed our minds, and, the best of all, clothed our hearts. We felt that we were

just as good as any man on earth. I felt like the hairs of my head were reaching out and giving praise to God for his goodness and mercy towards us, notwithstanding it hadn't been trimmed in about twelve months. I am satisfied we felt a great deal better than we looked. We could not endure it for any one to stand and gaze just like they had never seen anything.

The next morning a great storm was raging around Cape Hatteras. You know it is dangerous water around that point. A great many soldiers lost their lives only about twenty-five miles ahead of our vessel; the boiler exploded, no one saved but the captain. He held on to a piece of the vessel until some of our crew picked him up. He had been in the water about forty minutes when the pilot on our boat discovered him. We were very sick when we struck that rough water around Cape Hatteras, the most dangerous on the Atlantic coast.

One of the boys that was with me was from Mobile, Ala., and the other was from New Orleans, La. They were splendid fellows. Neither one of us had hats or shoes. A shirt and a pair of pants was our suit. If any one had offered to buy our suit they could have never gotten it. No one offered to assist us in any way. We soon steamed out of the rough water. We were out of the storm and once again steaming over the smooth waters of the great Atlantic. It seemed to me I was a marine on the ocean of freedom. When the sun and the moon rose, as it seemed, from out of the water, it was all I could do to restrain myself. It seemed that all the world was bright and lovely to my soul. The rays of the sun and of the moon were freedom as they gave light to the vessel and to the world. We thought of nothing, cared for nothing, except that we were free. O, long may the flag of freedom wave for all mankind. When I think today of that lonely spot, the old prison, I desire to exclaim, "Thank the Lord for freedom."

We were bound for Charleston, South Carolina, and about the 8th of September, 1865, we landed, at about

three o'clock in the morning. The people came down like they had never seen any one before. Five or six came down the street together and shouted, "Hello, what stragglers are you?" One of the boys caught him in the collar and I gave him a slap in the face. They left us in a hurry. We could not stand any insinuations; everybody had to attend to his own business. We met a good many that asked, "Where are you going?" and they invariably got the reply, "None of your business."

Out in the suburbs of Charleston we met a man who said, "Where are you going?" and he received the usual reply of "None of your business." He turned around and looked as if he didn't like it; one of the boys slapped him on the head, and he left.

Charleston showed the effects of the war. Most of the machinery was destroyed. We met one polite old gentleman who passed close by us and said, "Good morning, boys; had your breakfast this morning?"

"Yes, sir, thank you."

"May the Lord bless you."

One of the boys said he had already done his part. He snatched us out of hell. The old man asked us to tell him about that place.

"I never heard from that place before; I never saw any one from there before. Give me all the information you can concerning that terrible place."

One of the boys said, "Don't intend to go there, do you? It isn't a great ways from here."

"I have been living seventy-five years and I never knew I was close by it."

"I can't tell you just where to find that place. We are just from there. If you desire to go there, we will tell you all about the place; all about the big gate you go in. The Bible tells you about the broad way."

"Yes, but I never heard of that gate before. But if you are just from there, I will take your word for it. I am not making any preparations to go there at all. As I said at first, you boys are the only human beings that I have met from there. I was inquiring

from curiosity so I would be able to give definite information to any one inquiring about the place."

"Well, as we are in a hurry, we will tell you where we have been. We have been to Point Lookout, Delaware. We have been there ever since the surrender; have just been released."

"I have a grandson that was released just one week ago from that place. If you will remain here, I will go and bring him right up."

"All right, we will be very glad to meet him."

The old man soon brought the boy back. He seemed to be very cheerful indeed. He was among his friends. He moved his pants up a little above his shoes and showed us a gun shot wound received from those negroes while asleep in his tent.

I know we looked pretty tough going along the public highway—no hat, in our bare feet, with our hair long and uncombed, and our hands and faces tanned by long exposure; we were very much the color of an Indian. The railroads were not running any trains, and we started home afoot. We began our march through the country for home. We drew rations from the government in Charleston, hard tack and pickled pork, which we thought was very fine. We had drawn our rations on the boat regularly, but I wasn't hungry for three days after I ate that two pounds of meat and two pones of cornbread at the prison.

All through the country everything was deserted and lonely; we saw very few people on our route. We traveled about twenty miles a day. Not being acquainted with the country, we often took the wrong road, but we did not care for that, just so we were going to Atlanta and home. Although we were ragged, bareheaded and barefooted, we enjoyed that trip. We cared for no one and no one cared for us. We went in a sort of "happy-go-lucky-kind-of-way."

We were walking along just outside of Charleston and met some girls who had been out riding. One of the boys said, "That is my girl." They all stopped, and one of them said, "What did you say?"

"You are my girl," he replied.

"Where are you from?"

"We are from Point Lookout prison."

"Have you all been in prison?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"I am very sorry, indeed, for you all. Now, tell me, where is your home?"

"In New Orleans, Louisiana."

"Well, when you get home, if I hear from you, I will."

"All right, I will write you sure."

"You must get a new suit."

"All right."

"Here is my address," and she wrote her name and address on a piece of paper.

"Yes, ma'am." We all stood to one side and let them talk. I never said anything at all. They were the only girls we met between Charleston and the Savannah river. The young lady was very sympathetic and also very pretty. My boy said he was going to write to her sure.

Now and then one of the boys would holler out, "Where are you going, Frank?" and I would tell him. "Happy day, going home."

One afternoon, about four o'clock, we went out in the woods and camped close by a spring, one of those good old springs. And that water! I can taste it yet. It had a good old-time taste; you all know I am not talking about whiskey, but the water from that spring.

Let me tell you a little story about one of the boys. He slipped out one night, went out about a mile, struck up with an old soldier, told him where he was from, and also told him, "I would like to get a little toddy; I have no money, but I want just a little to see how it tastes."

"All right; I have a little apple jack, if you like it."

"Yes, sir, I sure would."

Well, he gave him one pint, which was very fine. We discovered that he was gone, and thought we had lost our partner sure. In a few minutes he came

back. He did not touch a drop until he entered the camp. He was the proudest fellow you ever saw.

"My friends, I think you all will excuse me under the circumstances." We all drank a very small drink. We ate our supper and felt better. We sat up late that night, talking, laughing and having a good time.

Reckon we must have disturbed some of the quiet fellows that night. About ten o'clock we heard some one say, "Who is that out there keeping up such a disturbance?"

"You come out and talk to gentlemen."

"No, I don't care for tramps."

One of the boys picked up a rock and threw towards him, but did not touch him. We heard no more from him.

We slept splendidly that night. We used two old pieces of blankets which we had picked up in Charleston; these we spread down on the ground and rested much better than we did at the place from whence we came.

The greatest reason the people never paid any attention to us was because we looked so bad. But we were just as independent as anybody. We had been dependent, but we felt that that day was passed for us. We were not looking for anything but home, sweet home. We were free men. We were free, and that was worth more than all.

You force a man under bondage and keep him there. When he gets out, he is the man who will enjoy freedom, more especially if he was treated like a brute.

The next morning, about sunrise, we folded our blankets, got our little breakfast ready and sat down. The meat was raw, no coffee, nothing but raw meat and hard tack. The boy that had been out the night before said, "Boys, here is a little apple jack." We were soon on our journey. We missed our course in some way; we passed through a little place called Ashland, S. C., about the fifth day; there we drew rations again—the same old sort.

We struck the Savannah river; there we camped for the night. We did not stay up late that night.

Our feet were getting very sore and we could hardly walk. The next morning we took our last toddy, ate breakfast and started on. We were a little bothered about getting over the river. At last we ran upon a little boat. No one knew how to use a paddle but me, and I hardly had sufficient strength to use it. We managed to get across though. About the time we landed, an old negro walked up and said, "Hello, my young ge'mmen, if you'se had waited just a little, I'd set yer cross for nothing. I live right up dar; if you'll go with me, I gib you the best old nigger ash cake you eber eat in yer life. My old 'oman just took it out de ashes."

I said, "All right." We felt—well, I don't know how we felt—that was the first negro we had had anything to do with since we left the prison. He was an old Georgia negro. But kindness controls the world. Couldn't we be a little more kind to our parents and to all the family and our friends? The negro was our greatest enemy at Point Lookout. We said when we left that prison we could never notice another negro. But that old negro, I believe, had a good heart. We were his bitter enemies, but he caught all three of us by that kind act of his. His was the first kind act we saw from a negro after we got out of prison. That old negro gave us old-time ash cake and buttermilk, and you know that is pretty hard to get around any time, and we were tired and hungry. When we had finished that one of the boys said, "If I had fifty dollars, I would give it to you for this act of kindness." We bade the old negro and his wife farewell.

We were now in Georgia—Georgia, the grandest old state in the Union; thank God we were in Georgia.

We were just from suffering the greatest afflictions in the world, the worst that could be inflicted upon a man, hungry and thirsty, suffering from the body pest, the insolence of the negro guard at the prison and a thousand other things we can not describe. I wish I had language sufficient, or could control your minds, to cause you to read this in a spirit of remem-

brance, in a spirit of sympathy and of good will, and not in a spirit of prejudice, not for myself alone, but for the private soldier of the Confederacy; he who stood when the world seemed to be on fire, who stood where he was ordered to stand, and who stood at Petersburg until he was ordered away by our beloved general, Robert E. Lee.

I wish I had words at my command that I might write the love and affection in which General Lee was held by his men. You old soldiers, I know how you feel about it sometimes; you feel that your great afflictions, your great suffering mentally and physically were without avail, that a few have received the honor, that the private soldier has not received the honor which is due, but it is only at times that we feel that way, for it is honor enough for any man to have it said, "He was a Confederate soldier." When General Lee receives honor in the Hall of Fame, not only in this country, but in all the world, I, too, feel honored. All the world honors the Old Guard of Napoleon; admires the bravery of the daring men who made the world-famous charge at Balaklava; but we, who fought under Lee, were as good soldiers as the world ever saw. The historians of the North, of the world, give honor to the bravery, endurance and fighting qualities of the Confederate soldier. General Lee is classed as among the world's greatest generals, and we fought with him, and the fame of General Lee and that of the Confederate soldier will endure as long as there is history and interest in such things.

Just so long as I live in this Southern land, and so long as General Lee is honored, I, too, feel honored. My comrades and friends, you may not feel as I feel, but I can not restrain my emotions as I write; every stroke of the pen is from my heart. The greatest honor that the Confederate soldier has today is that he is a Confederate soldier and that General R. E. Lee was our commander. Just so long as General Lee is given the honor of a great general, just so long

will I feel honored as a private Confederate soldier of the Confederate army.

The greatest trial of my life was when I was a prisoner. I have tried to give you a description of my life there, and how we felt somewhat degraded when we were free men. When we left the boats at Charleston, we felt like we were not looked upon as gentlemen. I felt like our friends were very scarce indeed. While we were on our way to our loved ones, we felt that we should have received more hospitality and sympathy of the people of that city. I know we looked worse than any set of prisoners that ever walked the streets of Charleston, looked more dependent than any soldier in Charleston, but we were on our way home, and were glad.

I expect that we traveled a considerable distance out of the way from Charleston to Atlanta, not knowing the route. And can you imagine how I felt when we landed on the west side of the Savannah river, in Georgia? We were thankful that we were blessed and free. Even the woods and the old pine fields looked good.

After one day's march from the Savannah, our feet being sore, we decided to rest one day. We went out in the woods about fifty yards, brushed up the leaves into a pile, and, resting on them, we felt refreshed and much better. About four o'clock in the afternoon we saw two or three men going along the road with guns on their shoulders. They discovered that somebody was out there in the woods, and asked us what we were doing out there. We replied, "None of your business." They walked on out to where we were. We had a splendid stick each. Just before they reached us we got up and addressed them. "Gentlemen, please return to your own places of business or you will regret it. We came out here to rest."

"Tell us where you are from."

"Don't mean to give you a short answer, but we are just from hell," They laughed.

One of the boys said, "What are you doing with your guns?"

"We are after a negro that killed this man's wife this morning."

"Don't try to take him at all; if you find him, just shoot him down and go on."

"He came out this way," one of the fellows said.

"I saw some one go in that old house right over there, on the hill, as we came up," I told them.

"Yes, I expect he is the man we are hunting."

They left; went over to the house and caught the negro, though he was shot and wounded first. We fell over on our pallets and went to sleep. We rested at that place that night. The sun rose the next morning very clear and pretty. It was very dry all through the country from Charleston to where we were. We ate our hard tack and pickled pork. We longed for a good cup of coffee that morning—but, needless to say, we didn't get it.

Our feet were in a terrible condition; we could hardly travel. We only traveled twelve miles that day. We were going by Washington, from which place we could take the railroad to Atlanta. We met up with several people who wanted to know where we were going. We told them we were going home.

"Where is your home?"

"Atlanta, Mobile and New Orleans."

About sunset we stopped in a pine grove. Our feet were very sore and our faces sunburned. We ate our raw meat and hard tack. We sure enjoyed our meals and the good water. That night we heard something like dancing. We decided we would step out on the hill and see; and sure enough it was dancing. We decided we would go up and see them dance. It was a very nice home indeed. Two violins were making splendid music. It was all I could do to keep from hollering out, "All promenade." We did not go up very close. Our feet were very sore, but we knocked a little dust and "cut the pigeon wing" a little anyway.

That was the most touching of anything we had come in contact with; it seemed so much like old times. My boys would holler out, "Frank, where are

you going?" "Going home, thank God." And everybody would laugh. We were feeling good while they danced; two old-time cotillions going on. I think we were enjoying the dance better than those in the house. I played the violin myself at home. They struck up one of the old pieces I used to play. I jumped up and yelled. The boys laughed. It was strange they did not discover us while we were making so much noise. The dogs discovered us first. We retired to our camping place and had a good night's rest. We ate our hard tack and raw meat the next morning and started on our journey.

About noon, September 23, 1865, we arrived at little Washington, Wilkes county, Georgia. We drew our three days' rations and went out to the train. They told us the train would move out at three o'clock that afternoon. We looked around and found a good place to rest. People would look at us in astonishment. We were as indifferent as any man in the town. One fellow came around and asked us where we were from. We told him just anywhere.

"You expect to take that train?"

"No, we expect the train to take us," one of the boys said.

"Well, I thought you had better get your tickets."

"We don't carry tickets, we go free."

"You beat your way?"

"Yes."

That fellow went out and told the conductor what we said. The conductor came to us. "Have you any tickets?"

"I never heard that question asked outside the car before. We are gentlemen; I want you to understand that."

"You can't get on the car until I get your tickets."

"We don't wish to have any difficulty with you. Is that your rule, sir, to call for the tickets before the people get aboard?"

"No, sir."

"Well, we are going on that train to Atlanta."

"I understand you said you expected to ride free."

"I say so yet, sir,"

"Well, we will see about that, sir."

"All right. Come on boys." We went right in and took our seats. In about five minutes the conductor came along with the sheriff. The sheriff came to me. "Have you a ticket?"

"Yes, sir." I took out my free transportation from Uncle Sam. He read it.

"You have as much right on this train as any man in the state of Georgia. That isn't all; I am going to see that you go on this train." A good many of the people expected some difficulty. When the conductor passed through, he never turned his head. We were in the greatest glee.

"Frank, where are you going?"

"Going home."

The train was very much crowded. I said, "Boys, I expect to raise some one's hat before I go much further." I was looking out for an opportunity to grab a hat. I was determined to grab a hat before I left Atlanta. The whistle blew for Atlanta, our home city. How often during the past years I had thought of Atlanta, Georgia. I had sure been around the world in warfare. When we pulled under the old carshed, I can't describe my feelings. When I looked out I saw nothing but the skeleton, the ashes of our beloved city of Atlanta. We learned the West Point train would not leave until the next morning. I looked about the city and saw the long letters, the old "Trout House"—it had been burned. I thought of the misery the war had caused to leave it like this; the city had almost been swept off the map. We all loved Atlanta. When I bade Atlanta farewell in August, '61, I left it well clad, well fed and everything in good shape. I thought of the great change in both Atlanta and myself from '61 to '65. I came back with no hat or shoes, just an old dirty shirt and pants. But I could at least thank God that I was a free man. out from under the terrible negro rule at Point Look-out.

In walking about, we came up to where some merchants were weighing some kind of boxes. We said we would like to see how much we weighed. They said all right. My average weight was about one hundred and fifty pounds; my weight then was one hundred and four.

Atlanta was crowded with soldiers all the time, and we attracted but little attention. We stepped up on a little platform and ate our hard tack and raw meat. I knew no one there and looked for no one. We didn't care to walk about much, our feet were in such a condition. We decided we would lie down and rest. We did not wake up until the next morning about four o'clock. "Boys, you all sleep there last night?" No reply was made to the question. The next morning we seemed to be very conspicuous; the people would stand and gaze at us. But we were feeling better, I have no doubt, than most any one in the city, because we were going home after a long absence.

I was still thinking about that hat. I told the boys I would never leave Atlanta without something to go on my head, even if it was a bonnet. We ate breakfast and went out to the train. We saw it was so crowded, we decided to go out on the freight. The conductor passed by us and said, "Boys, I bet you are from prison."

"Sure, we are."

"What prison?"

"Point Lookout."

"I wish I had known that sooner. You go and get on the train and I will take you anywhere."

"Captain, we are in too bad shape to go where there are so many nice ladies."

"You follow me." We went. We got into the car and the conductor walked up to some gentlemen and said, "Gentlemen, I want these seats vacated." They went into another car.

"You occupy those two seats. I feel honored to carry you anywhere I go." He turned to the ladies and said, "Here are three gentlemen just from Point

Lookout Prison, Delaware; no hat, no shoes; they certainly show from their looks that they have suffered. They suffered for you and for me, for our land and country." He took his hat from his head and placed it on one of the boys' head. "Take this and remember me," he said. "Time is up, we have got to go." By that time everybody in the car was in tears. I saw my opportunity to get a hat. An old negro was coming up towards the car, selling cakes. I was sitting at the window. Just as he reached the window, I reached out, took his hat from his head and placed it on my own. The old negro jumped and hollered for the police. The conductor saw it all. He moved his train up at once; he must have put on all the steam he had. Poor old negro! I was almost compelled to have that hat. All the ladies on the car were in tears, but when I reached down and took that hat, you never heard such cheering. I never saw a crowd so amused in my life. A great many of them were watching me when I took the old negro's hat. The boys knew I was up to something. I was determined to have a hat in some way. If Governor Brown had been close by, I would have taken his hat as quickly as I did the old darkey's; it would have made no difference with me—I wanted a hat.

Some one told me that General Gordon saw me take the hat. When he was in the race for Governor, Major A. D. Abraham and he stopped with me for a short time, on their way to Franklin.

"General, I understand you saw that hat raised from an old negro's head in Atlanta."

"Yes, sir, I saw that. I was standing about thirty steps from that train."

"Well, General, I am the boy that took the hat." I had heard General Gordon holler a great many times at the front in the army, but I had never heard him laugh as loud as he did then. He and Major Abraham both enjoyed my relating the circumstance.

"I only caught a glimpse of the soldier, but I saw the hat go in at the window. I also saw the negro trying to get in at the window to get his hat. We all

laughed very heartily at the negro. But I knew if that soldier was one of my boys, he would never get the hat. That incident is worth relating, and I am going to tell it." I never heard whether he got it in the newspapers as one of the war jokes or not.

Well, one of the boys was without a hat. One of them had the conductor's and I had the old negro's.

Just look at the difference in conductors. The one at Washington barked up the wrong tree. He hadn't lived long enough to learn some things. The conductor on the West Point road was a gentleman with a heart as big as a mule. We will never forget that man. His actions proved just what he was.

Down to Hogansville. Here my boys and I separate. My good friends, made in prison; we were together the whole time in prison and all the way home. All three were without shoes, and one of them was still without a hat.

"I will give you my negro hat, if you will accept it."

"No, you wear that hat home."

I bade the boys farewell. We parted in tears. How strong are the ties of genuine friendship. The friendship that springs up between men who have had all things in common; who have had the sorrows and the joys of life together. Would that there was more such friendship in the world. I kept up a correspondence with my good friends for a number of years. I would be very glad indeed to see them again.

I was off the train at the town nearest home. My feet were very sore, but I did not grumble; I was nearing home. It was only twelve miles away. I had not met any friends yet. I started out to walk to my home on the Chattahoochee river. I cut two good walking sticks, one for each hand. I felt all right about that negro hat; it was almost new.

About half way home, I became very thirsty. I stopped at a house and asked for water. The people looked somewhat frightened. They said there was no water.

"Thank you, ma'am. You have changed your well since I was here."

"I never saw you before."

"O yes, the last time I was here, I took dinner."

"You."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, tell me your name."

"I live just a short distance from you."

"Well, tell me who you are."

"I live just on the other side of the river. I would like to rest just a short while." No one offered me a chair. I sat down on the door steps.

"I don't know what to think; you have failed to give me your name."

"My name is Frank Edwards."

"Good Lord, are you telling me the truth?"

I called one of the girls by name. They recognized me. The old lady and two of the girls grabbed me. I tell you that hug lasted me a good while. I began to think they were going to hold me; they were my friends and neighbors. They were those that fill our hearts with joy. Sympathy was in all our hearts. We were looking and listening for the sympathy we craved. But instead we received the cold shoulder of our comrades, on our way from prison; not only from our comrades, but from the best people of our country. We talked and felt that the people of our country never realized our condition. At the same time, we were feeling good; thank God, we were free.

I went on my journey and soon came to the ferry over the Chattahoochee river, my old playground. I could not hold back the emotions that welled up in my heart. There I met the same old darkey that had always kept the ferry. I stepped up close by him. I called him by his name. He never recognized me. I told him my name, and the old fellow embraced me.

He said, "Where have you been? You look so bad and yellow, I hardly realize this is Frank. I am sorry for you."

That sympathy of the old negro helped me a great deal.

"Your mother will never know you unless you make yourself known. You don't look like the boy that left

here four years ago. You are so poor and lean." I said I was feeling good, and was going home to see that good mother.

It seemed to me I would never get home. It was three miles yet. My feet were very sore, and I only kept up with my sticks. I went through the woods; I did not care to meet any one. About four o'clock in the afternoon I arrived at home, the old home, sweet home. No one ever expected to see me again. They had been told by several parties that I had been killed at the battle of Petersburg. I am satisfied you can realize how I felt to some extent. Mother fainted two or three times. When she would look at me she would faint nearly every time. No one in the family recognized me at all until I went to the well to get water. "This water drinks like old times." Then all the family knew me. I will let you suppose what happened next. I forgot about my feet right there.

My mother always kept her knitting close by. That day she had her knitting in her hands. When she recognized me she threw her knitting away and it could not be found. One day about twelve months after, some one found the knitting up a tree, close by where she was sitting. It was indeed a happy day with me.

Happy day, when I could bless God at home. I met my father, mother, brothers and sisters at home, and a great many of my friends. The girls came from all around home. I sat there very quietly, and had very little to say; they did all the talking. I could hardly realize that I was at home. Such a change in everything; even the conversation seemed different; yet, everyone seemed to be happy, talking and laughing. Mother would scream out once in awhile, "I am glad to see my poor boy again; thank God I am permitted to see him again."

"We will pass around the nigger hat," I said. "I raised that hat from a negro's head in Atlanta." My mother took the hat and washed it and dyed it with logwood dye, and put nice bands around it. She went out and got an old-time gourd, about the size of my

head, and fixed it. The rim stood up all right, and fitted my head very nicely. An aunt of mine wove some nice gray cloth, a suit was made, and I was soon fixed up all right. I left a very nice pair of boots when I left for the war. I found them and shined them up, put on my nigger hat, and that new suit, and I tell you, I expect the boys around there felt a little envious. I really felt sorry for them, because all the girls in all directions wanted to go with the boy that wore the nigger hat. "Don't care where he lives or how he looks, I want to meet him." The boys began to think I was going to monopolize the whole country.

A great many people had cotton to sell. They were fortunate to have it; it was bringing fifty cents per pound, in gold, and that counted money very fast. Well, a good many of the boys had cotton. They sold the cotton and began to buy fine horses and buggies. I just gave it up. I had no cotton and not a dollar in my pocket.

I began to think what could I do. My father had one very good mule, except that he limped in one of his hind feet. I found a saddle, but it had no girth. I fixed up an old rope girth. I had no bridle except an old plow bridle. I finally found some old cloth reins. I didn't much like my outfit. I decided to go to church on foot the next Sunday. Good gracious! I found out that all the girls in the neighborhood were coming over to take me to church, all on horseback. I was bothered again. About ten o'clock, two girls came riding up the road in good style. In a few minutes two more came up. They all laughed and had a good time.

"Now, Frank, we would like very much to have your company to church. We heard you were making great preparations, and we decided to come over and go with you."

"All right, that is very nice of you. It has been a long time since I had that pleasure."

My feelings were beyond your conception. There was nothing I desired more than to get ahead of the

other boys. "Who came with you?" "I came up with the boy that wore the nigger hat." That is the way I beat them out.

I can establish every word I have written. You might think I wouldn't have said so much about coming home. It may be that you have heard all that you desire to hear concerning the war. If that is the case, just hand this over to the next man. If everybody was like some few smart people—know all they care to know—the rising generation would die in ignorance. If we never write what we know, if we never talk what we know, what use or good are we to anybody. Perhaps, I hope so, you might get some good ideas from this little volume. Some of the greatest joys of my life have come when I was the least expecting them. I have never written anything for publication before. I felt like I was not capable, and in writing this, I do so because I feel like I know some things that no one else knows. If you have aspirations, and do not try to attain them you will never realize them. That is why I am making this effort. No one mind will ever contain what all men know. I have thought a great many times, if I could write as intelligently and as forcibly as some men, I would take a pleasure in writing. Perhaps I am to blame; maybe I should have started sooner. I know a great deal about myself and you know a great deal about yourself; that is the reason we know so much about the other fellow, as to what he will do and what he will not do.

Recently, Mr. Glanton, of the LaGrange National Bank, gave me a group picture of Lee and his Generals, the generals of the Confederacy. I looked upon the faces of our beloved generals, faces upon which I had often looked in days gone by, and of most of them the younger generations have only pictures and statues to remind them, but the old soldier has a memory of the trying times they faced together. Of the time when all nations, it seemed, turned their backs to the Confederacy. The determination to do or die was manifested in their heroic efforts; on the post watching the enemy, in the charge on the lines, and the

long forced marches, and the suffering and responsibility of both the private soldier and his general. And then let us not forget the women of the South, the fairest and sweetest on earth, who worked early and late, amid hardships, to provide something to eat and something to wear for the boys at the front.

BOOK FOUR.

Some Incidents of the Great Four Years Struggle— Bitter Memories Softened by Time's Tender Hand.

I remember one dark, cold day, when the snow was falling in sheets, we were camped in the great valley of Virginia. We were not looking for orders to go anywhere, while the snow was on the ground. All the soldiers were feeling good. We had an opportunity to hear from home, and nearly everybody was engaged in writing letters. A courier rode up to the Colonel's tent, told him to cook three days' rations and get ready to move tomorrow morning at five o'clock. General Early came over that day to see General E. L. Thomas about going over in the Allegheny mountains on a foraging expedition, to a little place called Petersburg, about fifty miles from where we were, over in the mountains. Don't you know we dreaded that wild chase through the sleet and snow?

That was a great place for apple jack, and General Early drank a great deal. We decided that was the greatest reason for going over there. He claimed that there was a great quantity of sugar, coffee, meat, flour and fish there, but did not mention apple jack.

We had a very cold march, but a glorious time. We camped on the mountain the second day. A great many people lived in the mountains. I never saw so much honey in all my life. We were well supplied with honey and apple jack on that mountain; had several wagon loads of it.

The next morning we started down on the other side of the mountain. General Early and General Thomas started out early. We learned from old citi-

zens that there was a large distillery at the foot of the mountain. We received orders for no one to go in that distillery. General Early placed two guards there and gave orders that no private soldier was to go in there. The boys were all very angry. The officers went in and filled their canteens. General Early and General Thomas had been there and engaged all they had on hand. They moved on about two miles and struck camp. We were ordered beyond where they were camped. The boys decided to go into that distillery. The guard ordered us to halt, but the boys went right in. I think there must have been about twenty-five barrels of apple jack in that building. The boys knocked the heads out of a great many of the barrels, and everybody drank all they wanted, filled up their canteens and went to the camp. All the officers were drunk, and the whole brigade of soldiers. I never saw so many drunk men as I saw there. I never saw such a time as those boys had. Officers and men were drunk about three days. The thermometer was down about zero. The boys drank apple jack and honey; they were the sickest men you ever saw. General Early found out that his men were drunk; he just fell over and laughed and ordered his cook to fix up a little more apple jack and honey.

One of the colonels carried about two hundred men over to the little town of Petersburg, about four miles away, and captured a great many sacks of coffee and sugar and great quantities of meat and flour. We had all we wanted to eat. There were a great many pretty girls over there; before we came they claimed to be yankees; when we made our appearance they were Southern.

The people in this valley were very intelligent, had plenty to eat and drink. None of the men belonged to the army. They were for both sides. I saw two young ladies mount two as fine horses as I ever saw. They went out to the pasture, caught the horses, saddled them and rode away at a gallop. They would go in, make a fire and invite you in. I went in. I had

been out in the sleet and snow, and such a change made everybody sick.

It wasn't long before Generals Early and Thomas were all right again. We did not think of such a thing as a reconnoitering expedition over the mountains, but then we were glad we went, as we had such a good time, and we got something to have the best Christmas we had during the whole war. We had a great time on the return march. There was plenty of ice and snow and the weather was below zero. Sometimes a man would stumble and fall down the bluff. Somebody would have to go after him or he would never get back, as everything was slick with ice. General Early said he knew we would do what we did; knew we were going in that still, but he was compelled to give the order.

The boys found out that the officers had about five barrels of apple jack in one of the wagons. They wanted to get about two barrels of that. Finally they succeeded in getting two five-gallon kegs; they made arrangement with an old citizen to take care of that apple jack until they could call for it, telling him the package belonged to General Early. The boys' idea was to go and get it afterwards and deliver it to General Early to make him feel good. In about three weeks the boys thought they would go and get the apple jack for General Early. General Early had stopped in passing by, found out about the package, and demanded it. The old gentleman delivered it, and General Early went back to camp the happiest man you ever saw.

General Early sent out his courier to tell all those that were interested in the two kegs of apple jack to report to his office at once. They hesitated at first, but decided to report and give their reasons for moving the kegs of apple jack. There were eight of them. They had a spokesman.

"I just want to know your motive in moving those kegs."

"Well, General, we really didn't accomplish our intention. You know we all drank a great deal."

"Yes, we spent a great Christmas."

"Our motive was to hold up those two or three kegs two or three weeks, and then we expected to deliver them up to you. We thought you would be delighted, but you found them before we got ready."

"I feel like you have made a correct statement of your intention. I could not understand your motive. I have felt better since I got that apple jack. As we are all interested, I will deliver one keg to you, and I will hold on to the other."

"All right, we are satisfied."

Explanation.

Let not our fellow countrymen of the North mistake the spirit in which this is written. I do not write of my great suffering at the prison at Point Lookout to perpetuate hostility. I want that clearly understood. It is not my intention or desire to rekindle the passions of the Civil War, or to foster or keep alive any bad feeling between any part of the Union. I claim that the people who have forgotten the heroic deeds of the brave men on both sides in that great struggle are dying at heart. I desire for the people of our whole land and country to know what an American soldier will do and suffer and what they did endure in the great prisons of the North and of the South, for the love that they have inherited for liberty and justice. I can shake the hands of the Union soldiers, who fought the hardest, up to the wrist.

When I stood in front of the brass howitzers, in the mud, undergoing a great mental and physical strain, with the grape shot and canister and minie balls falling all around me, I did not have time to look for many other things, and a great many things happened right by me, possibly, that I never saw.

Because we were overwhelmed in that great struggle, is no reason for us to say we are ruined. The past is gone. We all agree now that it was for the greatest good of the country. I believe that God controls, and I am submissive. He has built us up again,

and once again we are prosperous, more so than before the struggle. We fought for what was right, but God ruled that we should not become an independent nation.

We have a great country, but I am afraid most of us do not appreciate it as we should. We should be the happiest people on earth.

Most of the old people realize that we are living too fast. It takes all of our life to learn how to live, and most of us fail then.

A Visit to Scenes of the War.

In June, 1907, Judge J. B. Strong, Major C. McFarland and I visited Richmond, Washington and Jamestown, and also the great battlefields of the Civil War, that being the time of the Confederate Reunion at Richmond. It was with a blending of joy and of sorrow that we passed over those well known places of our younger days; and of gladness that the great hearts of the people of Richmond still beat for the "Old Comrades," and invited us to come and partake of the oceans and rivers of hospitality. The Confederate soldier will never forget the good people of Virginia, and especially the good mothers and daughters; they hold a place in our hearts that will remain until we go down to the grave, to our last days on earth.

The State of Virginia is the home of our loved ones that fell from '61 to '65 to rise no more until the Last Day. We will ever cherish the grand old state and the grand people.

We attended the unveiling of the great monument to one of the great heroes, General J. E. B. Stuart. Thousands of the soldiers, after forty-three years had passed, stood and saw the unveiling of the monument on historic ground. They realized that General Stuart was the right man to place in command when Jackson was killed; that he exercised great generalship in carrying out the plans of Jackson, the result of which was the glorious victory for the Confederates at Chancellorsville.

We attended the reunion at Richmond and then

went to Washington, arriving there about seven o'clock at night. We passed by the place where Garfield was assassinated, a very lonely looking place. We stepped out on Pennsylvania avenue and I looked up towards the capitol of our great nation. I have never seen anything to equal that. Great monuments had been erected everywhere in memory of our brave boys.

We went to our hotel. The people seemed to be very social. I was somewhat surprised at this, as I have seen much more coldness shown in many of our Southern cities.

On the second day of our visit in Washington we passed around the capitol. It is a great show place. People from all parts of the world were there. We saw many cranks.

I recall one little incident that happened while we were there. There was a negro statue holding a torch at arm's length, and you had to look at it several times or get very close to it to discover that it was not real; at least I did. About the time I passed by, I saw two men walking up to the statue. One of them looked at it very hard and passed on. I saw he was very much undecided as to whether it was a living negro or not. He called to his companion to hold up, and came back to within about ten feet of the statue, and, speaking to the statue, said, "Look here, don't you get any relief?" Of course, he did not receive a reply. Then he saw his mistake. I could hardly stand, I was laughing so. The man was very badly fooled.

We went through the great Congressional library, the largest in the world, which is located just east of the capitol. I can not describe all we saw in that building. We saw the finest portraits from all parts of the world, some of them very ancient, centuries old. Histories of all nations. You could read all the papers published in this country, and a good many published in different parts of the world.

We went around to the Hall of Fame. I did not much like to see the pictures of our Southern heroes placed a little back from the front. I noticed General

Lee's just a little back. I said to Judge Strong, "If I could control just a few minutes, I would place General Lee's picture a little nearer the front." You know it is natural for us to notice anything that we do not consider treats our heroes right.

We walked around the city. We came up with a very nice looking gentleman. He proposed to show us the building where Lincoln was assassinated. He seemed to be very accommodating. We passed on around to a place that was a little dark. I told Judge Strong that I did not feel exactly right about the way we were being shown. Finally, we came to the window where Booth made his leap for life. Everything was prearranged by Booth. Some one held his horse close by a large gate. He mounted his horse and rode around the dark way he came, making his way to the Potomac river bridge. Just as he reached the bridge his horse fell and broke his neck.

We passed on around near the White House, but did not get a glimpse of President Roosevelt. I suppose he was down at his little office near by, where he did most of his work.

The Treasury and Post Office buildings are very attractive.

The third day of June, 1907, we went to Mount Vernon, Washington's old home, the Father of his Country. I have heard and read a great deal of his home and surroundings. I have heard my grandfather speak of that old goose quill pen. We passed through the grand old mansion. We saw his center table, ink stand, rocking chair and a great many other pieces of furniture. We saw the carriage that he used. We saw the great brick and rock tomb where his body was first laid to rest. In 1830 his body was moved about one hundred yards to a vault. We saw where his dear companion, the much loved Martha Washington, was laid to rest. These two places, about two feet apart, are guarded by the nation. His home is situated on a high bluff on the banks of the Potomac. We saw his fishing trestle extending about one hundred yards over the waters of the Potomac, his old

fishing boat and even his fishing tackle. There is in a small pasture just back of his residence, and between that and the river, a half dozen deer, the same number that he left there at the time of his death. We saw the wonderful farm lands very smooth and pretty. The cedars, set in rows, looked very old. I had desired to see Washington's home ever since I was a boy, and I was delighted when I did see it. It was a great pleasure to me. We steamed back to Washington.

We spent a most enjoyable night in the city. The next morning we visited Arlington, just down the Potomac. We certainly felt interested in General Lee's home. And we desired to locate the last resting place of some of our best friends, those that had been wounded and laid to rest at Lee's home, one of the grandest spots on earth—during most of the war in possession of the enemy.

We arrived at Arlington at ten o'clock. We passed around and through General Lee's residence, the loveliest spot on earth to him. The whole house, built in the Colonial style, the broad verandahs were supported by substantial columns, and overlooked the waters of the Potomac, and at a distance you could see the capitol of our nation. May his home stand there as a monument to the beautiful city of Washington for years to come.

We next visited the lovely cemetery, where a great many Union soldiers are laid to rest. We passed around the Southern sections. It was divided into half-acre lots. I saw the sign of the Georgia lot. The marble heads stood very thick. I stepped to the third head and saw the name of one of my best friends. No one ever knew what became of him. I called to Judge Strong; he and three or four neighbor boys came up and saw the name. While standing there we wept over our brave boys, after forty-three years had passed away. We had not known whether they were dead or alive. And the grandest thought of all was they were buried in the soil of the home of General Lee.

I think that there must be at least three hundred

from Georgia, and other Southern states in proportion, laid to rest on the banks of the Potomac, the home of the chief of the Confederacy.

The Union army thought to do a great injury to General Lee to confiscate that home and make of it a cemetery for their dead. But they could not have selected a more appropriate spot, or one that would give more lasting honor to their dead. Though when they did it they were ignorant of what the confiscation would mean, they erected a greater monument than any erected before or since, in memory of their soldiers.

I feel sure that what I have written will meet the approbation of all veterans. No honor they have ever bestowed upon their dead will equal the honor that has been bestowed upon our brave boys, buried in the soil of the home of General R. E. Lee, one of the greatest generals, one of the greatest men, one of the grandest Christian gentlemen of any age. I have not the command of language sufficient to give him justice.

He said at Appomattox, "I had rather died on the heights of Virginia with my heroes than to give that order for the different commands to march to the front and prepare to surrender."

We passed around to the monument placed to the memory of ten thousand unknown dead Union soldiers. That is very sad indeed, to bury men where they are not identified by any one. A great many of our boys fell dead on the heights of Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland, Georgia, Tennessee and elsewhere; and no one knows where their bodies are placed. Not even the sweetest flowers are placed upon the graves of the unknown dead. Not a tear fell when they were buried as the unknown. My friends, God knows his own. We returned to Washington City.

The next day we boarded the vessel for Jamestown, to visit the great exposition. It was three hundred miles to Jamestown. All kinds of people were on that boat, from all parts of the world, who had all kinds of games, cards, checkers, keno, and music, vocal and instrumental. It is delightful scenery along the banks

of the Potomac, and everybody seemed to have a joyful time.

As we steamed down the Potomac I thought of the old prison. I said to the captain, "Don't we pass by old Point Lookout?"

"Yes; I suppose you were a Confederate soldier?"

"I was."

"I was a member of the Union army."

"I was a Confederate soldier, and fought you very hard."

"Give me your hand; I love the soldiers that fought me at the front. So many men claim to be soldiers that are not. You fought for what you thought was right."

"I thought I was right; from the fact that I fought for a principle of justice, I know that I was right."

"Just to show you that I am your friend, I will go considerably out of my course to show you that old spot."

"How far is that from here?"

"One hundred miles. I will let you know when we get close."

"All right."

In the afternoon about 3:30 the captain told me that the old prison ground was then in sight.

An Everlasting Monument.

The Union army could not confer a greater honor on their dead than to bury them in the soil of the state of General R. E. Lee, the greatest man of the Civil War. When I say greatest, I mean it in every sense of the word.

The North, at the time they confiscated General Lee's home, cared or thought not of the results of that act; only wished to do him as great injury as possible.

Monuments have been raised in honor of the Blue and the Gray all over the United States; but I feel that there is one that surpasses them all, where the greatest number of our best men fell, where the heroes fell, where the greatest generalship ever seen on this

continent was shown, the most daring charges were made—the great Blue Ridge and Allegheny mountains stand today a witness for the Blue and the Gray; they looked down on the misery and the woe; on the great battles in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, and they stand today a monument that will always stand.

Some Rapid Marching.

We marched very hard for several days, through a fine country, and arrived at the peninsular of Yorktown. There was clover there as high as your head. We marched right into Washington's old works. There was the old ditch and parapets where his cannon were, nearly a century before that time. We had a skirmish at Yorktown. We were ordered back to Richmond, through rain and mud, over the worst roads I ever saw. We next fought the enemy at Seven Pines. Colonel Gus Bull was killed there. A braver soldier and better officer never lived.

After the battle of Seven Pines, we moved up to Richmond. General Joe Johnston was in command of the Confederate forces around Richmond, and General McClelland in command of the Union army.

General McClelland said he was going on to Richmond—would eat breakfast there the next morning. We were ready at any time he advanced, and when he did advance his army was routed the first day. He came again the next day, with the same result. General Johnston was wounded in the seven days' battle.

General R. E. Lee was placed in command of the forces. He changed everything, nearly. General Jackson was placed on the left. He marched around to the rear of the Union army and there was a general giving back of the entire Union army in five days' fighting. General McClelland was badly defeated.

We passed on up the valley to Sharpsburg where we fought a hard battle. We next went to Harper's Ferry, where we got about twenty thousand prisoners. We next crossed over into Maryland. We had a great

time over there, plenty of good fat beef and loaf bread, chickens and fat ducks. We came back to Manassas in August, '62, and fought a hard battle there. We went to Fredericksburg and fought a hard battle there on December 13, '62. We lost a great many of our boys there. General Cobb was killed at that place. We rested in winter quarters. There was plenty of snow and sleet. We rested until about March, '63.

The Battle of Chancellorsville.

I wish to relate a few incidents that happened at the battle of Chancellorsville.

Our command marched from Fredericksburg in May, '63, forty-two miles to Chancellorsville. About six o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at the battle ground. That was Saturday. They had been fighting all day and were still fighting that night. Our command marched in parallel with the Federal line. We marched to the left wing of the army and threw out our skirmish line. I was on the skirmish line that night, close to the enemy. We lay very still all night. It was a cold night. I was wet with perspiration, and I was so cold or excited it seemed that I could see the leaves on the bushes shake. The lines of the opposing armies were only from fifty to one hundred yards apart.

It was about six o'clock that Jackson was killed. We did not hear of this until the next morning. He had placed about six or eight men in a little settlement road and gave them orders to shoot anybody that came up the road. About thirty minutes later, Jackson and his staff went up the road. The guard fired. Jackson was severely wounded, together with two of his staff. He thought he knew the country, but he made a fatal mistake that night. He came up the road that he had given particular orders about. The guard obeyed his command and he was shot. It was the greatest error of the Civil War.

General J. E. B. Stuart was then in command of Jackson's lines. We were ordered to advance with our whole strength at daylight. One of the cannons

in the center gave the signal to advance. That was one of the times that I really dreaded the consequences. I had not slept that night.

When the cannon fired everything was ready. I was in no big hurry to start. About that time the commander of the skirmish line came around and said, "Get up and advance until you strike their main line, then fire and charge." When we arose the skirmish line of the enemy fired. We didn't pay any attention to that. We went right on until we came to the main line of the enemy, fired, gave a yell and charged. Their whole line gave way against the charge of our skirmishers. We lost a good many killed and wounded in that charge.

The enemy's batteries were throwing shells in all directions. One shell struck an oak limb close to my foot; the limb flew back and tore off the sole of my shoe. About that time I heard the most terrific firing on our right about five hundred yards away. It seemed to be in front of the Chancellorsville House. In about an hour the whole line was engaged. The enemy began to give way all down the line, with our boys pushing them. In front of the Chancellorsville House they seemed to be very stubborn, where they had thirty pieces of artillery. Our forces charged those cannon several times before they gave way. The brave North Carolinians charged and moved the enemy from those guns. That was one of the most daring charges ever made by our troops. I never saw such destruction; the undergrowth and stumps were torn all to pieces. The boys from North Carolina suffered; their dead were lying as close as I ever saw them; but they captured, I think, sixteen of those fine guns. The enemy was forced back with great loss. Those troops deserved the greatest honor for their courage and daring in that battle.

While standing there I saw the most touching scene I ever saw. Generals Lee and Stuart came up the road. Our dead and wounded, together with that of the enemy, were lying all around. When they came up, the men cheered. They halted about two

minutes for our men to move the dead and wounded out of the road. I saw men raise their hats to them, though they were lying there with their life blood flowing away, and never expected to be moved alive; men would raise their hands that never saw either of the generals, though their faces and hands were covered with blood. Generals Lee and Stuart could not hold back their emotions. When the road was cleared they rode away with their hats off. General Hooker recrossed the Rappahannock. He lost his "hooker" and his job, and came very near losing his army.

General Jackson, on the night he was killed, intended to capture General Hooker. He had intended to pursue him all night Saturday night. But he fell before he accomplished his work. General Jackson was one of the most loved generals in the Confederate army. He was loved by the most humble, he was loved by the highest, and the love of the men of his own command was unbounded; he was loved by the mothers of the South, and he had deep hold on the hearts of the whole Southern people.

I passed over the hill to get a drink of cool water. I saw a great many of our boys and of the enemy lying about. I noticed out to the left a blue coat sitting up against a tree. He seemed to be unconscious. I went out that way to see if I could aid him in any way. I saw he could not possibly live but a few minutes. I raised his hat and saw his skull was broken all around. I stepped down and filled up my canteen full of water and went back and bathed his head in cold water. It seemed to relieve him to some extent. I bathed his lips. Then I went for the second canteen of water. As I was bathing his face and lips again, I saw two yankees coming. I grabbed my gun and said, "Surrender, sir." They seemed to be very obedient.

"We have a passport from General Lee to look after the dead." Knowing the regulations of war, I took the pass and read it.

"All right," I replied.

"We would like to see this man." They stepped up

and looked at the man, then came back and gave me their hands.

"We have been looking for our brother that was wounded in your lines. This is he. We desire to thank you for the kindness you have done."

I gave them my name and address, by request. They were from Pennsylvania.

Foraging for Necessities.

One of the boys and I decided to go out one day and get some soap and salt. We could not get our hands clean unless we made up dough or rubbed them in the sand; and, of course, the boys preferred the latter. We could scarcely get salt to put in anything. A tremendous snow was falling when we started and we could hardly see our way, and we became very cold.

We called at different houses and finally about four miles from where we were camped we came to a very fine house. The old Dutchman came out and asked us to come in and warm. I went out on the porch to get a drink of water, thinking maybe I would find a piece of soap. I found a piece of soap, slipped it into my pocket and went on into the house. In a few minutes both of us began to turn sick; we had been so cold the sudden change to the good warm room made us sick. The old man seemed to have a good deal of sympathy; he stepped to the closet and brought out a large jug of brandy. I was a little slow, perhaps, in taking mine. There were two girls there, and one of them said, "We all take a toddy here every morning." I thought I would not refuse under the circumstances. We both drank a very good drink, and it seemed to be all we wanted; even the soap and salt were forgotten. We remained a few minutes and one of the young ladies brought out two bottles, one for each of us. We were now thoroughly warm and started on our journey.

We came to another nice place. I stepped up to the dining room window and asked them if they had any pies or anything of that kind to sell.

The young lady laughed very heartily and said, "No, sir, we haven't anything for sale."

We went back to camp. All the boys were very anxious for a bath. I told them to come up and take a bath, that I had found a piece of soap. I passed the water to them while they bathed. I came last. I saw they were laughing, but I did not know what was the matter. I scrubbed away, scratched the soap a little and found it was a slick rock. You never heard boys holler so loud in your life. The boys notified the whole army to look out for the man that stole the rock. The first letters I received from home after that stated they regretted that I had left the army and gone to stealing rocks. Along in the night some one would wake up and yell, "Who stole the rock." And about five hundred would answer, "Edwards." We had to do something to divert our minds. Perhaps we would be playing ball when some one would say, "Fall in line," and maybe we would be fighting the yankees in less than an hour.

Of all my close calls in the war, I think my life in prison came nearer killing me than anything else. I don't think the commander of the post could have been aware of the terrible condition of everything, of the thirst, the hunger, the body pest, no tents, no place to sleep except on the muddy ground, and you had to sit up and sleep, if you could; and, worse than all, were the curses and kicks from the negro guards.

At night, the guards, while walking about the streets, would shoot at random, you would hear some soldier yell with pain, and the next morning he would be carried to the hospital. The guard justified themselves by claiming that the wounded man had disobeyed orders, that he was compelled to shoot.

Reminiscent.

A great many men in the army would stand and suffer themselves to be captured rather than go in battle. They did that all through the war. They hardly ever came back. They would take the oath

and stay there. I never surrendered except when I had to. When I surrendered in that fort, I didn't have a cartridge in my box. I even borrowed cartridges from some of the boys that happened to have some. I thought we would all be murdered in that fort. I think yet the colonel of our regiment was murdered after he surrendered, as he was never accounted for. It was while we were on the way to the fort that I lost my shoe, and never wore any more until I reached home.

I have often thought of that terrible night when I captured that yankee by that pine; the man that was on post one mile below me was killed that night, about thirty yards from his post. When he saw they were going to capture him, he left his post and was shot by the enemy. I felt like that if I left that pine I would be shot, and if I remained, I would have a better chance, though when I heard them coming through the bushes, I thought there was more than one, maybe several; I thought if I shot, they would shoot me; if I ordered them to surrender, they would shoot. When he came out of the bushes, I could not see but one, and I thought the best thing to do was to capture him.

Why I Did Not Go Back to See My Girl in Virginia.

Some of you may want to know why I never went back to see my best girl, especially since she was undoubtedly the means of saving my life when she sent that five dollar gold piece to me. I can't see now how I could have possibly lived without that money. I paid out twenty cents a day for bread.

But, I was not the same boy when I was released from prison that I was when I was captured. My strength, both of my mind and body, was nearly gone. I could think of nothing except something to eat and drink; I wanted water, and I wanted bread; our minds rested upon that one thing for days at a time.

I don't think I was responsible for anything that occurred just at the time I was released from prison.

I had not will power to know what I was doing—just drifted along with the others.

After I had been home about twelve months, I wrote to her; wrote that I hoped she would forgive me under the circumstances. I told her of my life in prison, and that the money she sent me saved my life; but I hoped it would not be long until I saw her again. She replied in ten days.

I have received a great many letters in my life, but I never before nor since received such a letter as the one I received from that girl. She had heard several times that I was killed on April 2, '65, at Petersburg, and that officer by whom she had sent the five dollar gold piece, she had never heard from. She decided that I was dead and she would never see me again. I had written her telling of my life and that I would see her again, if God would preserve my life. I was greatly shocked when she wrote that she had been married just two weeks before she received my letter; that her joy was great to know that I was still living. I did not reply to her letter. I kept her letter in my trunk ten years. I have outlived all that part of my life, but still I hope the latter part of my life will be as honorable as the first part of it was.

Finale.

The reason I have written what little I have of my life is to let the rising generation know something of the hardships which the Confederate soldier had to undergo. Not that I am unwilling for the generals of the army to receive all the honor given them, but that the private soldier shall, also, in a measure, receive what is his due. While the general in command gives the order, "Forward," it rests with the private soldier to do the fighting; if he has the interest of his country at heart, is willing to go into unknown dangers; if he is willing to leave his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, his dear companion and children, to him the dearest objects on earth, and when he is ordered to hold a position or die, if he obeys he

is a good soldier, and is entitled to as much credit as the general. There are times when he is hungry and half clad; he may suffer in a war prison, and then be ready to sacrifice his life if his country demands it. The good private soldier will do all this for the love of justice and liberty, for what he thinks is right.

My desire is that you know some of the things that the private soldier has to endure. What I suffered, thousands of others suffered. Take that incident at the pine when I captured that yankee. I was ordered there, and when I went I was risking my life. The greatest responsibility rested upon me. The most desired information at that time was to know what the enemy was going to do. I got the information wanted by General A. T. Hill at the risk of my life. General Hill moved forward and achieved a great victory, mainly because of the information I obtained for him. The private soldier should be heard; I am defending myself. Not that I did anything more than could have been done by a good many others. I was quite young when I volunteered to serve my country. I never tried for an officer's place during the war. And I have never asked for a civil office since the war. I can stand and feel very sorry for the fellow that gets defeated and still hold my place as a private citizen.

I am not writing this to please the public, but for the old soldiers; not for the people that are looking for something untrue. I write what I have seen and felt.

The commissioned officers in the Confederate army received from \$750 to \$5,000 per year. The private soldier received \$11 per month. The officers paid for their rations from their salary; the private soldier had his furnished to him. The officer purchased what he desired from the government. The private soldier received one spoonful of peas, one cup of flour, one teaspoonful of salt and one cut of meat, if any, for his rations. The officer visited the city at his leisure; the private soldier had to carry a pass.

After a battle each side buried their dead, usually under a flag of truce. Often the dead were buried all

together. It was not often that the enemy buried our dead when we held the ground. At Chancellorsville, I saw three hundred buried in one grave, in a gully; it rained that night; the bodies held the sand, and everything was covered smooth. I have seen men buried with a part of their head and feet out. It is horrible, but such is war.

Who is the man that is favorably known today? He is the man that lives up to the great principles of the moral law, the man who has merit and who lives according to the moral law, has the confidence of the people. May it forever be said that the old Confederate soldiers were moral men, and may they have the confidence of all the people as long as they live.



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